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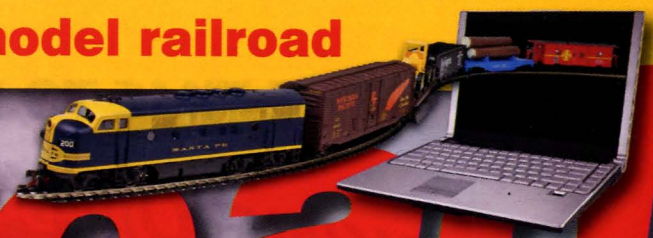

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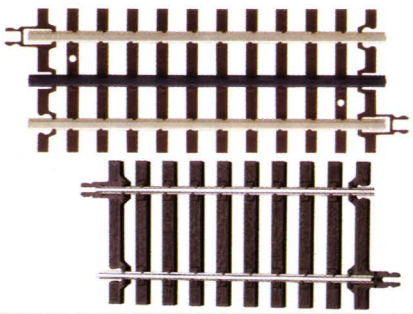
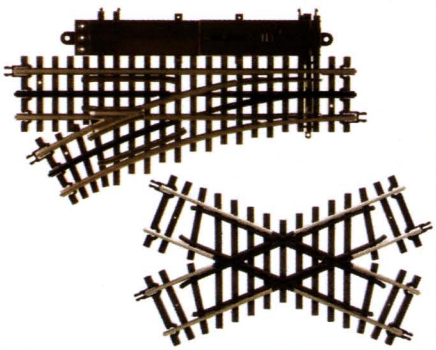


SWITCHES & CROSSINGS



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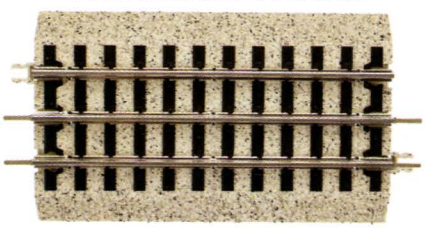

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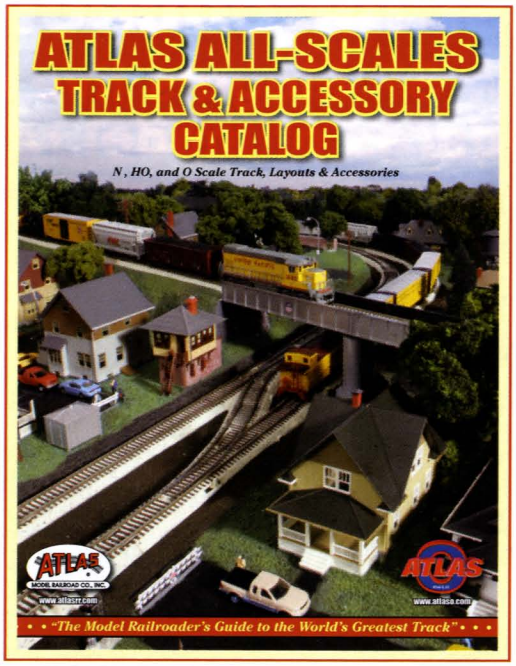
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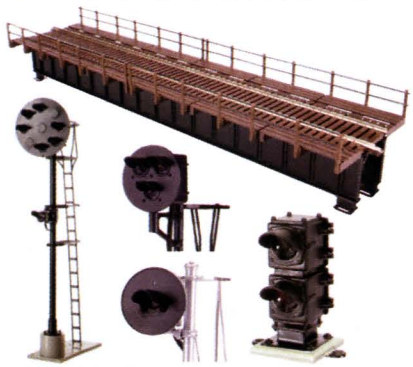

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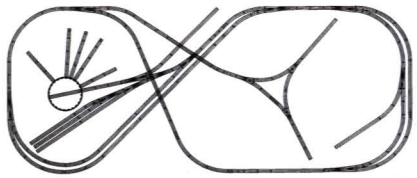

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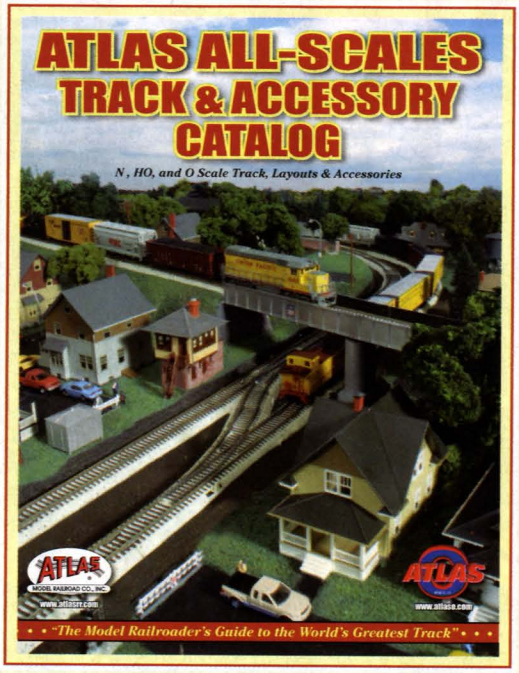
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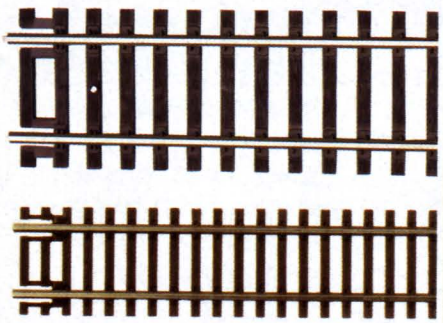

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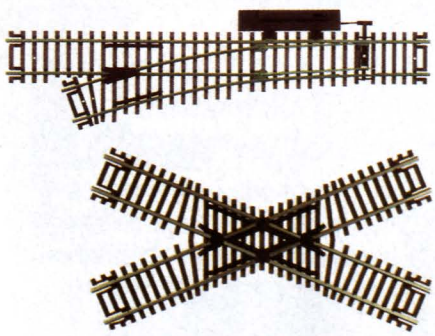

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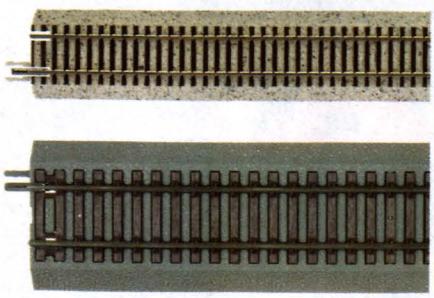

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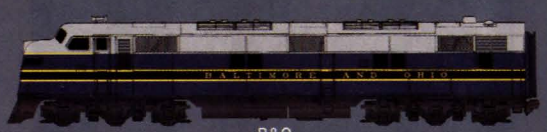

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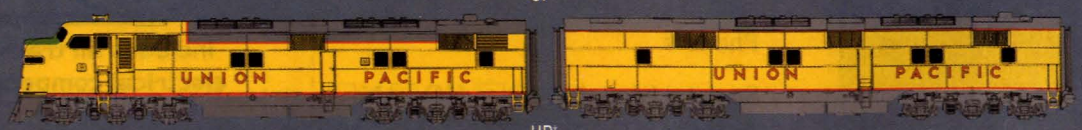

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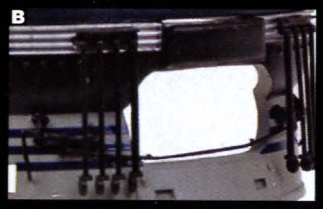

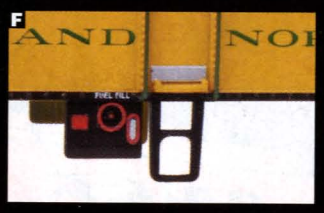

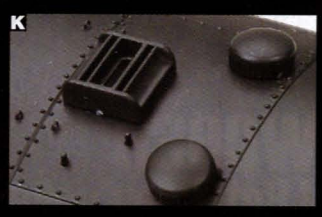

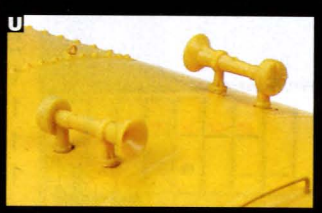

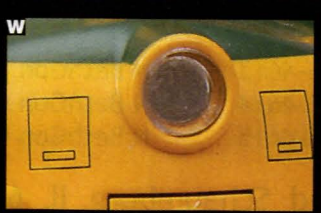

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G. Mars Light
H. Steam Generator
I. Wind Deflectors

GN
J. Simulated Anti-Skid Surfaces on Nose
K. Steam Generator
L. 3-Chime Airhorn and "Nail" Radio Antenna

NYC*
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N. Single Chime Airhorns

SAL*
O. Nathan 5-Chime Airhorn
P. Engineer's Side Walkway
Q. Mars Light
R. Angled Number Boards

SP†
S. Add-On Buffer
T. Full Fuel Tank Skirt

UP†
U. Single Chime Airhorns
V. Green Anti-Glare Panel on Nose
W. MU Hatches on Nose
X. Wind Deflectors

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N SCALE

A Symbol of Change for the BNSF

BNSF "Swoosh"
SD70MAC and Bethgon Coalporters

Photo by Paul Rome

EMD SD70MAC
Engine: EMD 710
Style: V16 Turbo
Horsepower: 4,000
Trucks: HTCR-II

BethGon Coalporter
Load: 244,000 lbs
Material: Aluminum

Aluminum is commonly used on coal hauling cars instead of steel due to the corrosive nature of coal when mixed with water.

Rediscover the Kato EMD SD70MAC with an all new release in an all new paint scheme! Ideal for both the BNSF enthusiast or the N-scale coal baron-in-training, the powerful and smooth EMD SD70MAC locomotive is now available in BNSF's latest "Swoosh" (also sometimes known as "wedge", "powerball", or "H3") paint scheme in both Cab and Nose headlight varieties! Enjoy this current-generation paint scheme on the proven Kato quality SD70MAC testbed, and rest assured that this is a change for the better.

Put the new SD70MAC to work with our matching BethGon Coalporters. Enjoy this opportunity to depict modern day coal operations on your layout; the lifeblood of electricity and heat facilities all across America. From the mines in Wyoming to all across the United States, the glittering trail of black diamonds can finally be yours to command. Intermingle the new BNSF Coalporters with BN and BNSF Coalporters for a more varied look!

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186-0604	N BethGon Coalporter BNSF Swoosh Single Car #671660	$17
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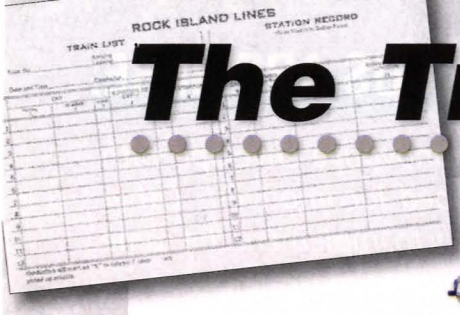

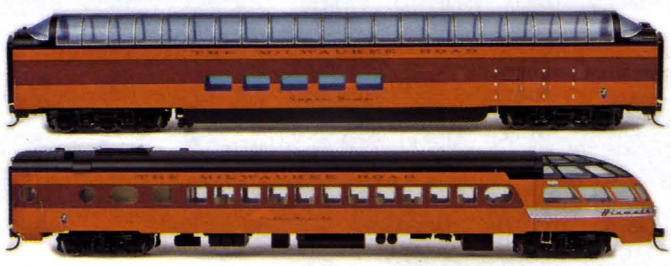

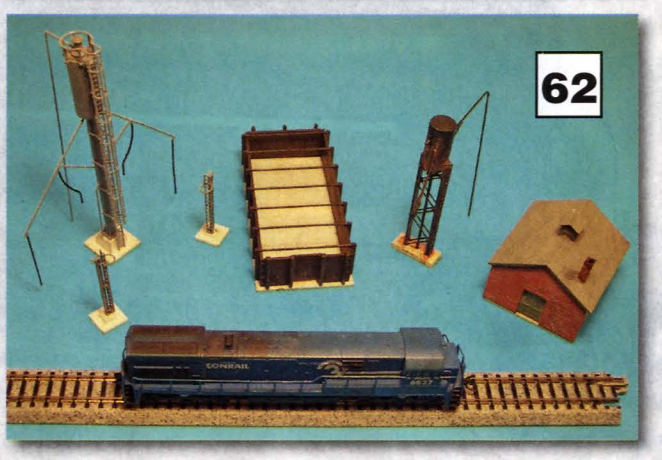

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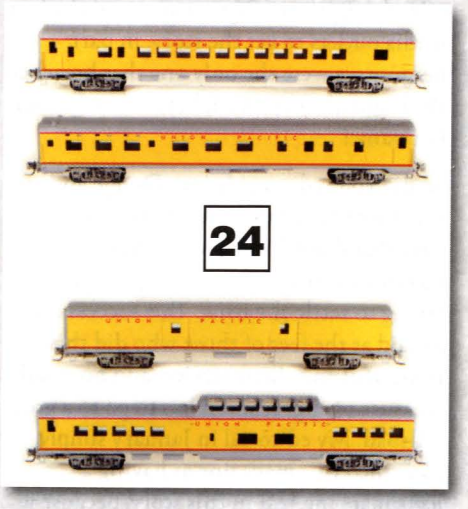

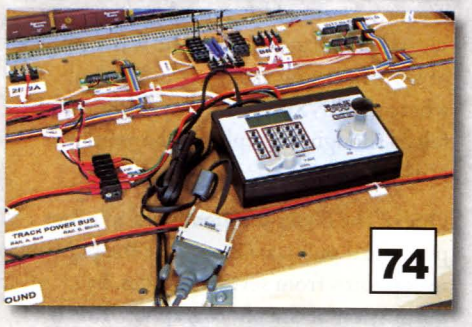

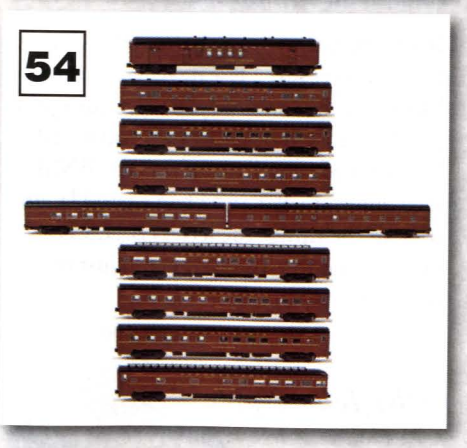

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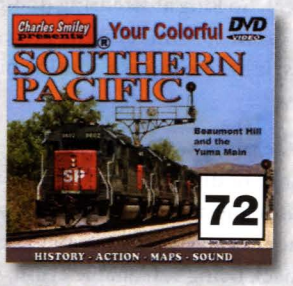
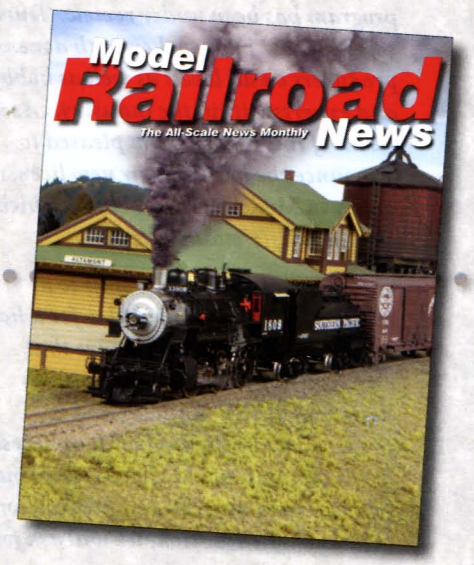




About The Cover: *Away from its usual duties around Los Angeles, Southern Pacific Mogul number 1809 rolls pass the Type 22 depot at Altamont, California with a short freight in tow. The new HO-scale brass 2-6-0 from Sunset Models is a welcome addition to the SP modeler's roster. Structures courtesy of American Model Builders, Inc. — Photo by David Otte*

Editorial

For only a buck

In the January 2009 issue, my editorial got around to discussing the licensing situation between BNSF and manufacturers of model railroad products that used their marks and trade dress. As such things go, there were two issues to the license, the first being the amount of money to be charged in order to have the official blessing of the railroad and some immunity from legal action. The second issue would be that of faithful reproduction.

The big problem was that they wanted a thousand dollars up front and five percent of the total sales. They weren't going to get it, because that's blood out of a stone. Then, just before this issue went to press, I was contacted by BNSF's Pat Hiatte. We actually hit it off right away. He started his railroad career on the BN and followed it up to the BNSF, thirty long years. He never told me what turned the trick on the licensing deal, but something did. They are now working on a new plan. Ready?

For only a buck, a model railroad manufacturer can buy a license. Gone is the thousand bucks and out the window is the five percent thing. Here. I'll let you read the letter, dated February 4, 2009, yourself:

Dear Mr. Sipple,

I read your editorial of Jan. 9, 2009, and would like to update you and your readers on some favorable developments with regard to BNSF's licensing program. The purpose of the program is to protect the brands of BNSF and its predecessor railroads.

Since late November, our licensing program has been under review. During this review, I have spoken with dozens of producers on all levels as well as hobbyists and experts within the industry. As a result of this review, I am pleased to announce the basics of our new licensing policy in Model Railroad News, *which should satisfy most concerns.*

The essential change is to shift to a minimal fee of just one dollar for a license. BNSF will continue to require that anyone using the names and visual designs of BNSF Railway and its predecessors be licensed with us. These visual designs include logos and paint schemes from current and predecessor railroads. In addition, we will ask for a representative sample of the products using our marks, to ensure that they conform to brand specifications. If the cost of providing a sample is prohibitive, however, we will accept digital images. There will be no recording or records requirements for the licensee, but from time to time, BNSF may ask a licensee to provide additional samples for approval.

Our revised license is in preparation now, and we expect to be able to send it to current and potential licensees during the first quarter of this year.

We are very proud of our 160-year history. We don't want to stop anyone from producing products, but we do want to make sure those products are appropriate and reflect the grand tradition of our railroad and its predecessors. Furthermore, BNSF and its licensees will be benefited by having these licensing standards because BNSF will be better able to enforce its rights against unlicensed users and against the production of substandard products, which could undercut the sales of its licensees. BNSF will keep you advised of any changes in its policy as a result of changing marketplace conditions.

Patrick Hiatte

BNSF Railway Company

Mr. Hiatte said the company hopes they never have to do any litigation surrounding this issue, and I agree. It's a counterproductive way to live. I was less concerned about that, given the low price of the deal. So long as licensing doesn't cut into the overhead and raise the prices of products, it becomes just a routine bit of paperwork.

You can be sure I was pretty impressed by this change of direction. BNSF had always been reasonable to deal with, right up to when they became unreasonable. Now they're back being reasonable again, and that's good. My grandfather said, "Any leaf, so easily turned, may be just as easily turned back." I would like to think the many years of good relations with BN, ATSF, and now BNSF has set the direction of this tangent.

I have yet to hear from our product makers on the topic because they're just hearing about it as I write. In fact, Mr. Hiatte said *Model Railroad News* was one of the first media outlets to get the story, in part because we were the only one that breached the original story. Well, hey, "News" is our last name!

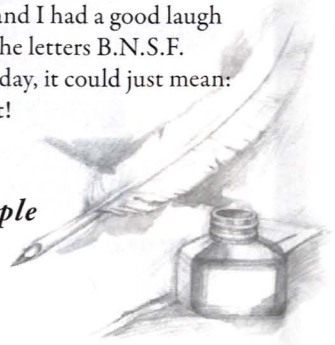
So did your editor ride into Dodge and save the town? Not hardly. Industry leaders (and that doesn't include me) have been meeting in some very quiet diplomacy, trying to settle the issue. This success can be laid at the feet of those who did this respectful and silent service, and no small measure of appreciation has to go to a great railroad. My editorial in January simply identified this magazine as having a legitimate interest in this story, because it offered to have an impact upon our readers.

But my conversation with Mr. Hiatte didn't stop there. Between asking questions about BNSF-specific issues that any researcher might want to know, we discussed SteamScenes calendars and Nils Huxtable. We have featured his calendars in review several years running, and he was a victim of UP's licensing attempts. So I asked where the BNSF license was going, and I felt as though the reply was hopeful for Nils.

One of the issues in calendars and other periodical publications is that the publisher uses photos from several sources, by permission of the photographer. This is because the photographer owns the photograph. This is a First Amendment issue, well beyond the reach of Intellectual Property lawyers. Just because there is something inside the photo that looks like your trademark doesn't give you any rights or financial claims on the photo or the photographer. So I am hopeful BNSF will confirm this on their end.

In the meantime, we're better off today than we were just a few days ago. It is very likely that, by the time you are reading this, the licenses will be going out, and a fresh batch of orders will be off for new BNSF locos and cars. Pat and I had a good laugh over all the things the letters B.N.S.F. might stand for. Today, it could just mean: Buy New Stuff, Fast!

— By John Sipple



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Some factory-painted, pre-production models shown.
13935

Fresh From The RPO Car

Response to BNSF Editorial

I just read your editorial in *Model Railroad News* about BNSF wanting to get paid for their logos.

You would think Union Pacific and BNSF would be glad that they are getting a lot of free advertising from the NMRA.

A few years back I tried to buy some railroad equipment from Southern Pacific. Doing business with the head people of Southern Pacific was like talking to a stump. I think all railroad big wigs need to have a lesson on public relations.

I think if I was in the business of making model railroad equipment I wouldn't put their logos on anything. I would let someone else make the logos and let the customer put the logos on. This would probably bankrupt the railroads, but who cares? If someone else makes the decals, let them pay the blood-sucking railroads.

Thank you for letting me get this off my chest.

William Nipper
North Bend, OR

Feel better now, William? Read this month's Editorial and you'll feel better, yet. We (and I include myself here) have carried some momentum from the UP debacle, so based upon recent events, I'm gaining some hope for the situation with BNSF. -John

Dieselization Comes to SP *Daylight*

The article about the N-Scale PAs by KATO is excellent. There is a minor correction though as to the service time of the SP PAs. Mr. Scandura mentions the PAs lasting until Amtrak. This is not correct.

Southern Pacific, including the Cotton Belt, had the largest fleet of PAs, 53 PAs and 13 PBs. The first PA retired was the 6013 on 2 January 1962. By 1967 there were ten PAs: 6029, -34, -36, -37, -39, -41, -42, -43, -44, and -46. All were taken out of service and retired in July 1967.

The PAs represented by the Kato models are as follows: SP 6056 was originally T&NO 203A later numbered 206. This unit was retired 22 January 1962. SP 5924 was retired 3 March 1966. The PAs were all repainted into the Bloody Nose scheme by late 1960.

Cliff W. West
Rainier, OR

Thanks Cliff. On a railroad as complicated as SP, nailing down fine details of research in the limited time available while building a review is often not possible. We always appreciate when our readers offer updates. -John

Atlas takes exception to column headline wording

This is in response to your "At the Grade Crossing" column, pp. 96-7, February 2009. While your observations are factually correct and we appreciate the kind words about our new HO- and N-scale 1993 Ford Explorer models, we regret you took the occasion of a simple new product announcement from Atlas as the basis of what amounts to an editorial on the general economy, price increases, and foreign manufacturing.

The headline, "Atlas announces new Explorer and the economy takes a toll on prices" gives the mistaken impression the two are directly linked, seemingly blaming the announcement for the state of the economy! While we wish our products had that much clout, the fact is we are very optimistic about these new Explorers and were hopeful for their positive reception in the model railroading marketplace. That may now be mitigated, given the impression the column gives regarding manufacturing and price increases. We would like to note the following:

- The Ford Motor Company has raised its royalty fees numerous times during the period you cite. The deposit we must give Ford, as well as guarantees of the amount of Ford printed cars we produce annually has also risen repeatedly.

- Multiple manufacturers are involved in producing our vehicles. As you detailed in your column, this carries with it a variety of issues and compounded prices, fees, and new alliances which must be negotiated.

- Other increasing costs include Chinese governmental regulations, mandated minimum wages for its workers, commodity cost increases, changes in currency, fuel and shipping surcharges and increases, and more, as you rightly detailed.

"Mr. Cawthon's headline, 'Atlas announces new Explorer and the economy takes a toll on prices', is, from Atlas' viewpoint, an unfortunate juxtaposition of words and ideas," said Thomas W. Haedrich, CEO. "The headline links two disparate facts which gives an unfair impression of Atlas and its new product. The result is that Atlas and this product could be perceived as a stand-in for all that is currently thought wrong with manufacturer pricing. Atlas is extremely conscious of pricing decisions on all our customers and continuously strives to reach the fairest price for all."

Detailing price increases over the past seven years, alluding to "greed" on the part of manufacturers, and comparing our Explorers to less expensive models, we feel, might have a potentially negative impact on the sales of this product at a time when Atlas is doing all it can to remain vital and support model railroading during an economic downturn. Mr. Haedrich further stated,

"The model railroad community is indeed fortunate in many ways for the acquisition of Sanda Kan by Kader Industrial Company Limited, not the least being that Kader is a family-owned and operated company which has a deep understanding of the global toy and hobby industry. There is hope, with the continued support of model railroad hobbyists, that the current global economic downturn will be limited in regard to model railroad product availability and price increases."

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"While as Mr. Cawthon reports, many Chinese toy companies have gone out of business, it should also be recognized that the entrepreneurial spirit is alive and well," Mr. Haedrich continued. "In Guangdong province, the large southern China manufacturing region where Sanda Kan is located, approximately 62,000 companies closed their doors in 2008 according to government reports; however, more than 100,000 companies were started resulting in a net increase of 38,000 companies. While many Chinese companies are struggling, the willingness to remain flexible and innovative guarantees a continuation of quality goods being produced in this part of the world."

We sincerely appreciate Bill calling our HO- and N-scale Explorers "must-haves," "one of the hottest models of 2009" and worthy of a New Model of the Year Award. We can only hope that will be sufficient to boost sales of what we hoped would be a popular item, much requested by model railroaders.

Thank you for this opportunity to respond.

Atlas Model RR Co., Inc.

Thanks for sharing. In point of logic, the two elements of the headline are linked, but not in a cause-and-effect relationship. As the articles states, the Explorer model is being introduced into an economy where prices are rising. Bill's column, in my opinion, answers in advance the complaints many modelers might have had about the new pricing. Now they can appreciate such price rises aren't the fault of Atlas. All of our columns may present editorial content and, while we advertise for our advertisers, we write for our readers. Back issues are available by contacting our office. -John

More on Kits vs Ready-To-Run (RTR)

I agree with Andy Anderson's comment (Jan '09 issue) concerning kits vs. RTR. I have been modeling for more than fifty years. During that time I was employed full time, raised four children, and still had time to build several layouts. In addition to rolling stock, I have assembled loco kits from Bowser and MDC. My grandson who has just turned eighteen has assembled fifteen loco kits plus a variety of rolling stock. He is also a full-time college student.

Insofar as marketing goes, we all know that you can make numbers do what you want them to reflect. Also hobby shops ought to review their kit pricing. I think two or three major suppliers have found a way to extract more money from the hobbyist, simply by cashing in on the "I'm too busy" excuse of some people.

Robert Kubiak
rskgg1@nep.net

If you really are too busy, Robert, then it's not an excuse. Marketing can make numbers do fascinating things, but if they get it wrong, their client crashes and the marketing firm eventually goes out of business. Hobby shops pass on the cost plus a standard mark-up on all of their products. The issue for the shop owner isn't just the margin on a given line of products, it's the turn rate. If a kit sits on a shelf for two years, the owner's money is tied up there, and he won't buy any more of them. If you ran such a shop and found RTR turned every three months while kits turned less than once a year, what would you stock? -John

Another Kit vs. RTR perspective

I am disabled having injured my back which requires facet injections every four months and also had lung cancer resulting in the loss of two lobes of my right lung causing breathing difficulties. These injuries have stopped me assembling kits due to physical difficulties and have also stopped me airbrushing. I am therefore entirely reliant on RTR for my HO rolling stock and am very grateful to Kadee, Intermountain, and Proto 2000, as without all these superb offerings I would have lost interest and ability to even contemplate building a small switching layout. The layout currently under construction is 6-feet by 1-foot 4-inches, the track is nearly laid, will be DCC and then I will be able to really enjoy my RTR stock. The necessary urban scenery can be added bit by bit at my leisure.

Gordon Walker
Aberdeen, Scotland (UK)

Thanks for your story, Gordon. I can appreciate your hardships since I have Benign Essential Tremor, a left-over effect from having polio as a child. I love to build kits, but my hands shake too much for that. I can do most modeling activities except the exceedingly fine work. I also can't airbrush properly, either. Ready-to-run products are a real joy to me. As a life-long model railroader, I still

appreciate the money savings and pleasure of building kits. Those who build kits should work as a subgroup of the hobby to be sure they take advantage of the kits that are still available. -John

S-scale Track Questions For Dick Karnes

Although I model in HO, I want to build an "S" scale switching layout based on the back streets of large city warehouses. I have purchased some rolling stock from S Helper Service, but no track or turnouts yet. Your Feb 2009 S-curves article cleared up a concern I was having as to why some S-scale suppliers were selling code 100 flex track while SHS sold code 110. I was worried that the scale wheel sets I changed out from SHS would not run on code 100 rail. I now assume the code 110 is for the AF modelers. Also, I was not aware of the turnout guardrail situation you mentioned. WOW! I missed that one.

J. L. Hempel
ljhempel@peoplepc.com

The track sold by S Helper Service is nominally code 125 (0.125 inches high). The "Code 110" notation refers to the thickness of the SHS scale wheel, 0.110 inches. All NMRA-standard S-scale wheelsets, including those provided by S Helper Service, will operate satisfactorily on any size rail down to Code 55 (or Code 40 if glued rather than spiked).

The reason so many sizes of rail are used in the various brands of S-scale trackage (Codes 125, 100, 83, and 70) is to reflect the prototype variety of rail sizes. Many of us S modelers vary our rail sizes. For example, I use Code 100 for mainline, Code 83 for yards, and Code 70 for spurs. Until the Amtrak era, portions of the Pennsylvania Railroad used the largest rail in the US, equivalent to Code 125 in S.

The larger Code 148 trackage is marketed by American Models to accommodate the deeper flanges of American Flyer and AF-compatible hi-rail wheelsets, although the SHS Code 125 track products also accommodate AF and AF-compatible equipment without difficulty. If you aren't interested in running AF or AF-compatible equipment, there's no reason to use Code 148 trackage products. -Dick

Sievers Benchwork

After reading your review of Sievers benchwork in the February '09 issue I just had to write to let you know you are spot on. I am building a new layout and instead of trying to do all the cutting, etc. myself I decided to go with Sievers and couldn't be happier. Their product is top-notch. Everything fits as it should, the people at Sievers are wonderful (they even showed me ways to save money), and their service is second to none. I would highly recommend Sievers to anyone who is carpentry challenged like I am.

Dave Keys
Millinocket, ME

Station Dimensions

I found *MRN's* February cover story review of Walthers' HO-scale Everett Street Station helpful, even though I do not model in HO scale. However, with the cover describing the model as "BIG" (in all caps) and the story using the adjectives "imposing" for the station and "immense" for the train shed, it is surprising that the footprint dimensions were not included in the review. Fortunately, this information can be found on Walthers' web site. The station building is approximately 25-1/4 inches long and 8-1/2 inches wide. The train shed is approximately 22-3/8 inches long and 11-1/2 inches wide. I would like to have seen a photo of the reviewer's two train shed kits positioned end-to-end.

I model in S- and O-scales, and while I do not anticipate using the station as a background structure, I do feel that the train shed could be used as both for its intended purpose and as the loading bay for a bus depot. Without examining the support columns, I would consider substituting Central Valley bridge girders for the train shed legs if converted to S- or O-scale.

Gil Hulin
Eugene, OR

Longevity of 1:1 scale diesels

I would like to know how many miles a railroad runs a diesel locomotive before they have it overhauled? Also, how many times does the average locomotive get overhauled before it is determined that it is time to replace it? Do the railroads in this country scrap a locomotive when it is determined that it is beyond economical repair, or do they sell them to some private industry or some foreign country? Many years ago I

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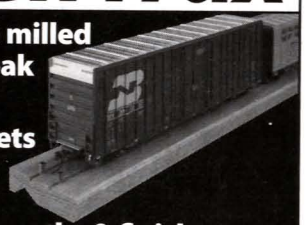

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was told that a lot of locomotives that were outdated were sold to countries in Central and South America.

Robert E Holland
Bakersfield, CA

Good questions, Robert. The answers are complicated and yet simple. Generally, the first trust deeds and lease contracts on most new diesels run for fifteen years. After that, the locomotive often undergoes a major overhaul, usually its first. The money to do that overhaul is borrowed against a loco that has been rejuvenated and should be good for another seven or eight years. It has been said that so long as you don't bend the frame, an EMD locomotive may get rebuilt indefinitely. We have some old Geeps that go back sixty years that work on shortlines every day.

The big railroads often sell their older machines to private companies that rebuild and lease them, often back to the railroads they came from! A large number of older US diesels have found their way south of the border. EMDs, GEs, and even Alcos still run outside the United States, something to look for and photograph when you go on a trip. Model railroaders may accurately mix old Geeps and new high-horse diesels in modern scenes, even if they'd never get lashed together. -John

N-scale sound question for Phil Scandura

I am thinking about upgrading an Atlas N-scale U23B with DCC sound. Because sound-equipped locomotives are new to me, I have a few questions about this.

First and foremost, do you feel that it is worth the price to put a sound decoder into an N-scale locomotive? Do the sound decoder speakers for N-scale locomotives offer basic sound or are they truly "ear" catching?

If it is worth the cost and sound quality, what are my options to install a sound decoder into an Atlas N-scale U23B? Following is a list of the features I would like to have on such a decoder: Rule 17 lighting effects, Function Mapping, Support of added lighting effects, specifically an LED for a nose headlight and two LEDs for ditch lights, and V12 FDL prime mover sound.

Theodore M. Parker
tmp@like2hike.com

Good day, Theodore, and thanks for your question. My experience to date with N-scale sound have been locomotives than came "from the factory" already equipped with DCC and sound (the Athearn 4-6-6-4 Challenger, reviewed in the June 2007 MRN), or all-in-one drop-in decoder boards that include sound on-board (the MRC decoder/sound board for the Kato P42 and E8/E9, reviewed in the September 2007 MRN). In both cases the decoders were made by MRC (Model Rectifier Corp.). Although other manufacturers of sound-equipped decoders exist, MRC is the only one I'm aware of that offers drop-in sound as a light-board replacement for N scale. You can find the complete listing of MRC decoders at www.modelrec.com/train-controls/dcc-decoders.asp including Item #0001636, called the "N GAUGE DIESEL SOUND DECODER" that directly replaces most Atlas N-scale loco's light-boards, according to MRC. For this decoder, however, the speaker is not located on the board, rather it is connected to the decoder by a length of wire; you have to make room for the speaker. I have seen an Atlas GP40 installation article for this decoder posted on the Aztec Trains web site www.aztectrains.com/pages/DCCFrames.html — they provide a milling service for N-scale frames and may be able to mill the U23B, assuming it is of split-frame, drop-in light-board design.

Regarding the sound quality of these decoders, given the small size of an N-scale loco and the extremely small speaker (smaller than a coin) you'd be amazed at the realism they achieve, provided you make a few adjustments. The MRC decoders come with all volume controls set to the maximum setting by default, resulting in a very loud loco and some distortion. You'll want to adjust the volume CVs to suit your taste. Remember that when you're standing next to the loco on the layout, you're still typically several hundred feet from it prototypically. And when it's running around the layout, you're even farther away; perhaps "miles away." So you don't want the volume to be overpowering (especially if you have several sound-equipped locos on the layout).

Whether or not the prime mover sound produced by the decoder actually matches the actual prime mover in the prototype is still a gamble in N scale. Unless the locomotive comes factory-equipped with the sound decoder, I wouldn't expect the prime mover sounds to match. The drop-in decoders are often designed to fit more than one model, so it's unlikely the prime mover will match. When I reviewed the MRC decoder for the Kato P42 and E8/E9, a reader later pointed out to me that the prime mover sounds offered by the decoder (it had more than one that you could select via CV) were from neither the P42 nor E8/E9, but something else instead. Quite frankly, this is a matter of taste, as I do not have the knowledge of what different prime movers sound like — I simply selected the one that I liked best for my P42.

With regards to lighting effects, most decoders today provide a respectable array of choices, but not all decoders support additional lights (such as ditch lights) unless they have enough function outputs and solder pads for connecting external lights. Reviewing the manual for the MRC #0001636 mentioned above (you can download the manual from the web site), it doesn't seem to support lighting effects or additional lights.

One annoyance with today's sound decoders is related to programming. Many decoders do not support CV readback due to an incompatibility between the NMRA programming standard and the high current draw of sound decoders. So for the most part you're programming "in the dark."

Getting back to your original question, "...do you feel that it is worth the price to put a sound decoder into an N-scale locomotive?" I believe that while N-scale DCC sound is no longer in its infancy, it is still barely just a toddler. You can get pretty good results, but you're limited to the locos you can equip and the available features. Just as HO-scale sound has made considerable advancements over the years, I'm confident N scale will follow suit. But it will take awhile. I enjoy my Kato P42 with MRC sound, but I'm not rushing out to equip all of my N scale fleet with sound — at least not just yet. –Phil

—

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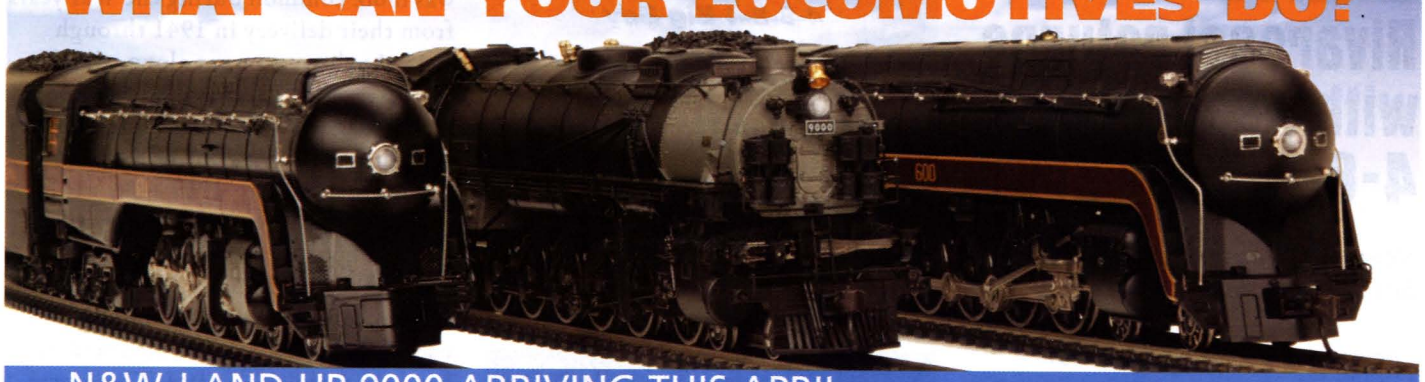

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REVIEW HO

Rivarossi returns with weathered 4-8-8-4 Big Boy

New model supports DCC and Sound operation

Review and Photos by John Sipple

Weathered 4-8-8-4 Big Boy, Sound/DCC, MSRP: $499.99
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WE'VE covered a number of *Big Boys* over the years and have exhaustively discussed their history. We have on hand Number 4014, the fifteenth member of the first group, erected in 1941. What sets this version apart is outwardly the weathering. Weathering? Well, that's as good an excuse as I needed to look at bunches of photos!

As a rule, official photos on the UP were of recently-bathed *Big Boys*. However, working photographers often caught them with their hair down. Anything that burns tons of coal over a fairly short period of time is going to get filthy, especially when that sooty smoke is mixed with water vapor. Amazingly, UP forces kept their Four Thousands remarkably clean, but I did find dirty *Big Boys*.

By-The-Numbers

4-8-8-4 Big Boy
Rivarossi
HO 1:87 • Type: Steam
Traction Tires? Yes

Pull Power (Ozs @ Full Slip)

Pull	÷	Loco Wt	=	Efficiency
6.9		18.5		37.3%

Volts	Amps
16	0.52

Analog DC

Start Volts = 9

Volts	Amps	Scale MPH
9	0.12	1
13	0.28	40
16	0.32	67

DCC

Stall Amps (if applicable)

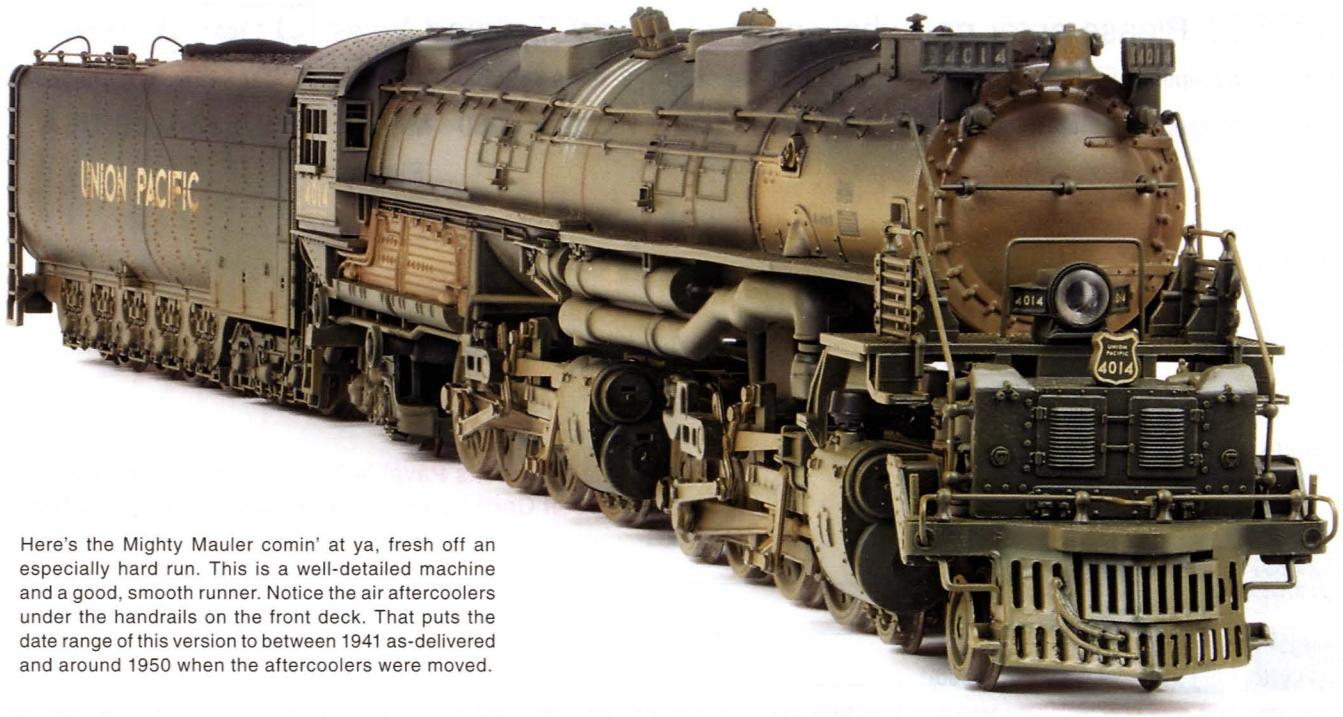
Speed Step (of 128)		Scale MPH
Min	1	1
Mid	63	31
Top	126	69

As might be expected, cleanliness was more common during the War years from their delivery in 1941 through 1945. As the years went along, all of UP's steam fleet suffered more neglect. The vintage of a *Big Boy* model is often determined — if it's one of the first group from 4000 to 4019 — by the location of the air compressor aftercoolers. This group had them on the sides on the front top deck under the handrails. The second group — 4020 to 4024 — used Wilson aftercoolers mounted behind the front grille plate. These were installed on the earlier group in the late forties to early fifties.

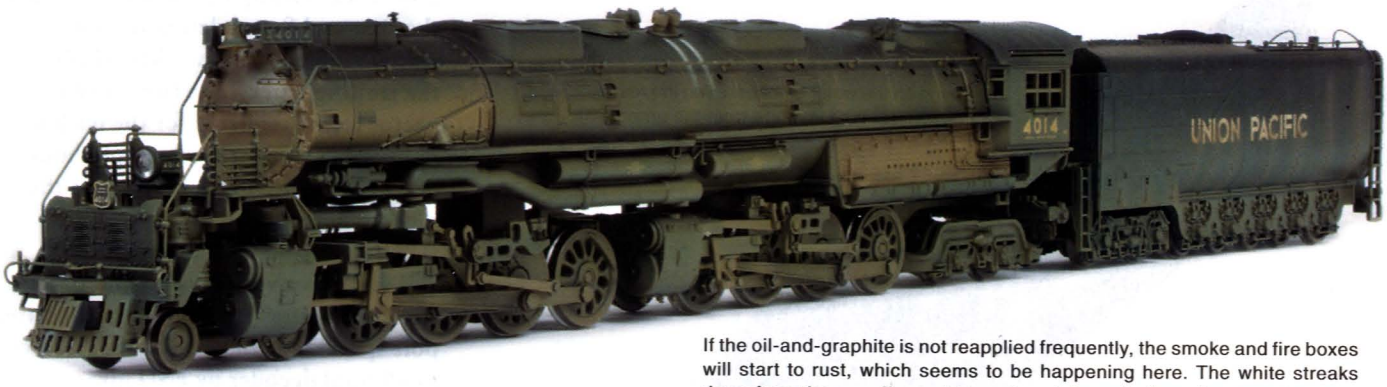
Different seasons of the year would have a predictable impact on the situation. During wet, miserable weather, any piece of railroad equipment is going to get filthy, especially down around the trucks and the lower sides. A *Big Boy* assigned as the road engine with another of her kind helping in front might get to be a real mess before it got to its next bath.

Rivarossi's new Big Boy

This isn't the first time Rivarossi has given us a 4-8-8-4. Back in the Seventies, they were imported by AHM, but Rivarossi has been building them since 1967. After that time, several versions came along, none of them DCC-ready. The DCC functionality and weathering



Here's the Mighty Mauler comin' at ya, fresh off an especially hard run. This is a well-detailed machine and a good, smooth runner. Notice the air aftercoolers under the handrails on the front deck. That puts the date range of this version to between 1941 as-delivered and around 1950 when the aftercoolers were moved.



If the oil-and-graphite is not reapplied frequently, the smoke and fire boxes will start to rust, which seems to be happening here. The white streaks down from the popoffs would be mineral deposits from the steam vapor.

sets this release apart from the previous, non-Hornby versions. This is their first time producing number 4014.

The basic model is good, with nicely formed separately added details, metal handrails, and plenty of exterior plumbing. A *Big Boy* is — well — big, and this one is no exception. It conforms pretty well to published drawings, though I noticed the leading truck and the pilot extended farther forward than the prototype, but not by much. It would seem this is an accommodation for operation around tight-radius curves. While the axle centers on the drivers are just right, the wheel diameters are 0.732 inches at the wheel tread, translating to a scale 63.68 inches compared to the prototype's 68 inches. This is a concession to the non-scale flanges most HO locomotives have, but I don't consider it to be particularly noticeable.

Okay, so what's my overall impression of the weathering? I think it's a bit over-the-top, rather like this is an Army *Big Boy*. First, it's all over, even if it is heavier along the sides. One of the things most modelers learn, after trying their hand at weathering, is it's easy to overdo. Streaks down from the pop-offs on each side replicate water vapor laden with mineral impurities. This symbolizes operational filth as opposed to long-term rust and neglect. The brownish color of the weathering seems to indicate rust, a look that came onto a locomotive as a result of long-term neglect. The dirt I've seen pictured in color photos and footage of *Big Boys* tends to be grayer, a mixture of dust from basaltic ballast, oily exhaust residue, and carbon blacks from the burned coal.

While this model is generally ready-to-run, there are some aftermarket parts to install, if you wish. Brake hangers are mounted between the driver axles. On the back of the cab, there are handrails to install. The handrail installation was a bit strange, since the preformed parts didn't fit quite right. It would have been nice if there had been an apron plate between the cab and the tender, but its absence is yet another nod to tight radius operation.

The tender is a nice item which, like the locomotive, is mainly styrene with metal wheels and handrails. The coal load is believable and is part of the general shell molding. A two-pin plug connects the tender to the locomotive as does the drawbar. This last item is metal and quite long, originating forward of the trailing truck. It offers three holes for three different mounting distances.

Wheels and Tires

As with most HO and other scale models of large, mainline articulated steam locomotives, both of the engines

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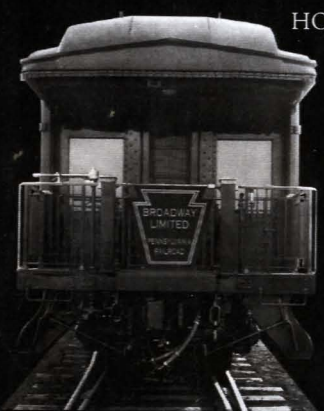

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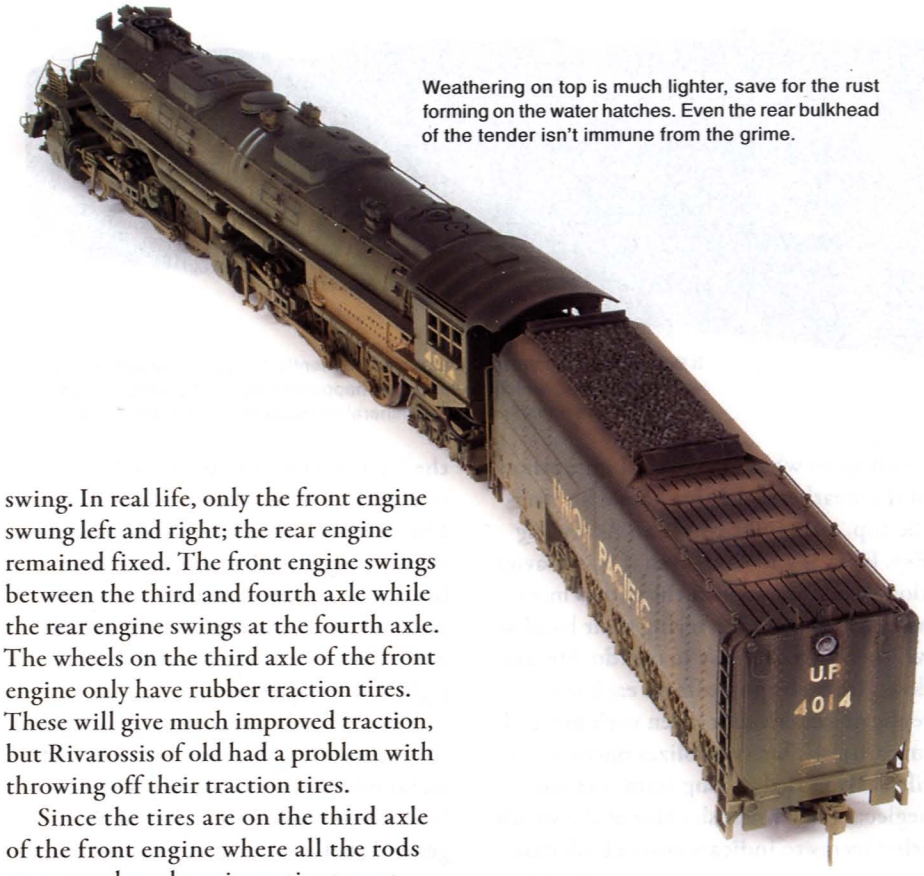


Weathering on top is much lighter, save for the rust forming on the water hatches. Even the rear bulkhead of the tender isn't immune from the grime.

swing. In real life, only the front engine swung left and right; the rear engine remained fixed. The front engine swings between the third and fourth axle while the rear engine swings at the fourth axle. The wheels on the third axle of the front engine only have rubber traction tires. These will give much improved traction, but Rivarossis of old had a problem with throwing off their traction tires.

Since the tires are on the third axle of the front engine where all the rods come to play, changing a tire or putting one back on promises to be a lot of fun. If you have trouble keeping traction tires on, try putting a small spot of CA glue at three or four spots around the rim. Hold the tire out with a pin and use another to put just a dot of glue in there. Hornby also includes a spare driving axle that isn't grooved for traction tires, but they didn't include an extra set of tires. The spare axle's wheels aren't weathered.

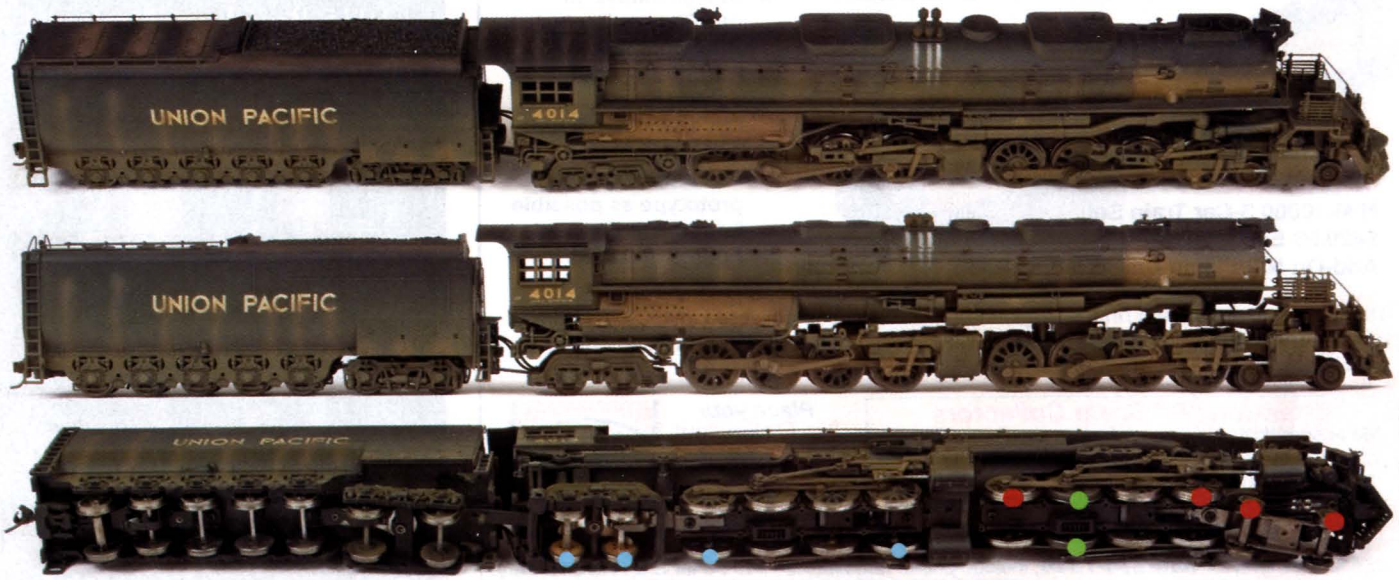
Operation

I found the loco stalling in switches, which surprised me, because the *Big Boy* should have an immense electrical wheelbase. This sent me to the workbench with a Volt/Ohm meter where I checked the wheels for continuity. Sure enough, the reason was pretty clear. Pickup from the right rail is via the first and fourth right wheel on the front engine plus the two right wheels on the lead truck. Pickup on the left was from the first and fourth left wheel on the rear engine plus the two left wheels on the trailing truck. The two-pin connector to the tender is for the backup light, so the tender, with its plethora of wheels, contributes nothing to the pick-up party.

This time out, the Rivarossi *Big Boy* features a very smooth and quiet five-pole motor (as opposed to the three pole sparkers at the beginning), and the LokSound decoder by ESU gives the machine great performance in DCC. It started at 1 scale mile per hour on speed step 1 of 128. A top speed of 69 is very reasonable. The *Big Boy* was theoretically capable of 85 miles per hour, but they rarely ever ran faster than 70. With a mid-speed of 31, that makes this loco a very smooth performer.

Sound is acceptable. The bell is very good (and very loud.) The whistle is sort of like a *Big Boy's* throaty call, and the chuff is an imitation of a simple articulated that goes in and out of sync between the two engines. The decoder and its speaker are in the locomotive, and so they miss the chance to use the big tender box as a speaker cabinet for better bass response. I'd like to see the two connectors for the light, two for electrical pickup off the tender wheels, and two more for a speaker. Maybe the next time around.

Under DC, the model proved to be an able performer, running a scale mile per hour at 9 volts and the upper sixties at sixteen volts. I gave this mon-



Three views in one shot give you more information, and this is an interesting product. The bottom shot has red dots for the right rail, blue dots for the left rail, and green dots for the traction tired wheels. Would you pay an extra $50 to have pickups on all the drivers, left and right, and also on four of the tender axles?

ster a heavy train consisting of fifty 40-footers in a general merchandise train right out of the forties. Despite the lightness of the loco, the traction tires helped it to handle this train with authority, except when it laid down due to electrical pickup issues on a couple of switches.

Throughout the entire testing sequence, I had the locomotive and tender connected on the closest of the three holes, and I never had a lick of trouble with it. I sent it through steep #4 switches and around Loop 1, featuring 18-inch curves, all without difficulties. It never gave me any tracking problems whatever.

Another Big Boy

Yes, we've had several *Big Boys* hit the HO market in the past couple of years, and here comes another one. Each has brought its own characteristics and features to the market. All of the most recent ones have offered sound and DCC along with analog DC capability.

So what does this Rivarossi model bring to the table? In a nutshell, it offers a combination of price point and weathering. Rivarossi has a good reputation among experienced model railroaders. I think Hornby could prevail upon Rivarossi to add more wheel pickups, especially to the tender, but the other drivers are also good targets for such an upgrade.

The weathering is compelling, but in my opinion it is a bit over-done. However, some might prefer it that way, and so I'd propose yet another compromise. How about three different roadnumbers, one with light weathering, one with medium, and one the way this model is offered?

Still, most of us have trepidations about taking an airbrush to an expensive model, knowing you could end up ruining it. That makes this an excellent value for someone who wants a weathered *Big Boy*, and she's also a good runner and puller. Say hello to the Weather Girl!

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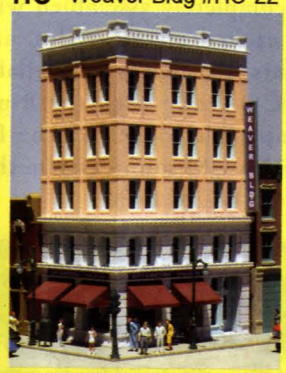

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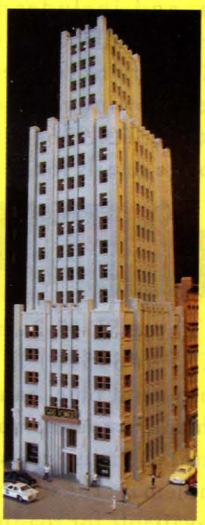

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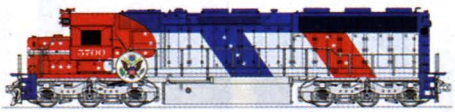
New N-scale SD45T-2 and HO EMD F7A and F7B locomotives

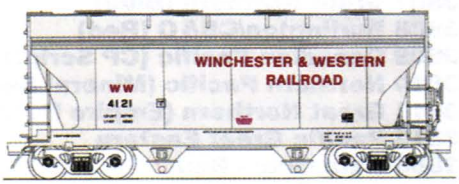
N & HO — Intermountain has released new locomotives and rollingstock in both N- and HO-scale. The fully assembled models are available now from your local hobby shop.

N Scale

An SD45T-2 locomotive has been released for Larry's Truck Electric Service (#69513). It is painted black with the LTEX reporting marks in white. The model features prototypical details such as cab windshields, bells, air conditioners, and includes numerous etched metal details, a DCC-ready drive, and Micro-Trains couplers. It is available in the following roadnumbers 9238, 9259, 9261, 9360, 9364, and 9366. The locomotive retails for $119.95.



Three SD45-2s have been released. ATSF (#69596) is decorated in red, white, and blue. Santa Fe designed this scheme to commemorate the USA bicentennial. Included is the multi-colored emblem on the side of the locomotive. It is available for roadnumbers 5702, 5703, and 5704. BNSF (#69597) is painted orange and green in the *Heritage* scheme. The body striping is yellow, and is available for roadnumbers 6460, and 6481. Seaboard System (#69598) is painted gray with a red and yellow logo, and white lettering. There is a yellow stripe along the sill. It is available for roadnumbers 8963, 8965, and 8973. The models have molded and etched-metal details, and Micro-Trains couplers. The locomotives retail for $119.95 each.



A new ACF center flow 2-bay hopper has been released for Winchester & Western Railroad (#66514). It is painted tan with red and black lettering, and is fully assembled with etched metal roofwalks, and Micro-Trains trucks and couplers. It is available for roadnumbers 4102, 4104, 4105, 4119, 4121, and 4123. The hopper retails for $19.95.

An ACF 4650 cubic foot hopper is now available for BNSF (#67065). It is painted red oxide with white reporting marks, and is equipped with etched metal roofwalks, and Micro-Trains couplers. The available roadnumbers are 402122, 402143, 402160, 402203, 402248, and 403000. The hopper retails for $21.95.

HO scale

Intermountain is offering new EMD F7A, F7B, F3A, and F3B locomotives. They come completely assembled with wire grabs, etched metal grilles, and Kadee couplers. The drives are available as either DCC-ready with the 8-pin NMRA-compatible socket on the PC board, or with a QSI sound system that will operate on DC or DCC.

EMD F7A and F7B locomotives are now available for Lehigh Valley (#49059 & #49559). They are decorated in Cornell red with black striping; the roadname is lettered in dulux gold. The A-unit is available for roadnnumbers 560, 562, 572, and 574, and the B-unit is available for 561, 563, and 571. The A-unit retails for $99.95 without sound or $169.95 with sound, and the B-unit retails for $94.95 without sound, or $164.95 with sound.

An EMD F7A locomotive has been released for Western Pacific (#49062), decorated in the Perlman green scheme. These locomotives have been produced in two variations of the orange striping. Variation one is available for numbers 914-A, and 917-D, and variation two is available for numbers 918-D, and 921. The locomotive retails for $99.95 without sound, or $169.95 with sound.

Three EMD F3A and F3B locomotives have been released. Gulf, Mobile & Ohio (#49120 & #49620) is painted dark and light red. The lettering and fine striping are yellow. The A-unit is available for roadnumbers 807B, 808A, 808B, and 809B, and the B-unit is available for B-61, and B-62. Chicago Great Western (#49121 & #49621) is painted maroon and orange with yellow striping. The round CGW logo is also yellow. The A-unit is available for roadnumbers 101-A, 102-C, 103-C, and 106-A, the B-unit is available for numbers 101-B, 102-B, and 103-B. Chicago & Eastern Illinois (#49122 & #49622) is decorated in blue with orange striping for the C&EI. The A-unit is available for roadnumbers 1200, 1201, 1202, and 1203, the B-unit is available for numbers 1300, and 1301. The A-units retail for $99.95 without sound or for $169.95 with sound. The B-units are $94.95 without sound and $164.95 with sound.

A USRA composite gondola has been released for Chicago & Alton (#46618). It is decorated red with white lettering, and is available for the following roadnumbers: 43015, 43098, 43153, 43276, 43361, and 43447. It is equipped with laser-cut wood panels, with details inside and out, metal wheelsets, and Kadee couplers. The gondola retails for $29.95.

A Maxi IV stack car has been released for Pacer (#47351) in an articulated three-car set, and each car will accept up to 53-foot containers. There are more than fifty etched-metal and wire parts on the three-car set. The model is detailed for the early version cars and painted for Pacer in bright blue with white lettering. The cars are equipped with metal wheelsets and Accurail scale size knuckle couplers. The available roadnumbers are 6055, 6127, 6142, and 6166. The cars retail for $89.95 per three car set.

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Pennsylvania Railroad theatrical scenery cars from Images Replica

HO — Images Replicas has released a Pennsylvania Railroad B70a theatrical scenery car. It is painted and lettered for either Romeo (#6061) or Juliet (#6062), and comes with diecast trucks and Kadee couplers. Twenty-five of each name are being produced. The cars retail for $120.00 each.

Images Replicas, P.O. Box 99, East Norwich, NY 11732-0099; 516-922-0010; Fax: 516-922-1564; E-mail: transit@imagesreplicas.com; www.imagesreplicas.com

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Dome Observation Car, Union Pacific (#551 00 010), MSRP: $28.60
Coach, Union Pacific (#552 00 010), MSRP: $28.60
Baggage Car, Union Pacific (#553 00 010), MSRP: $28.60

Micro-Trains Line Co.
P.O. Box 1200
Talent, OR 97540-1200
541-535-1755 • Fax: 541-535-1932
www.micro-trains.com

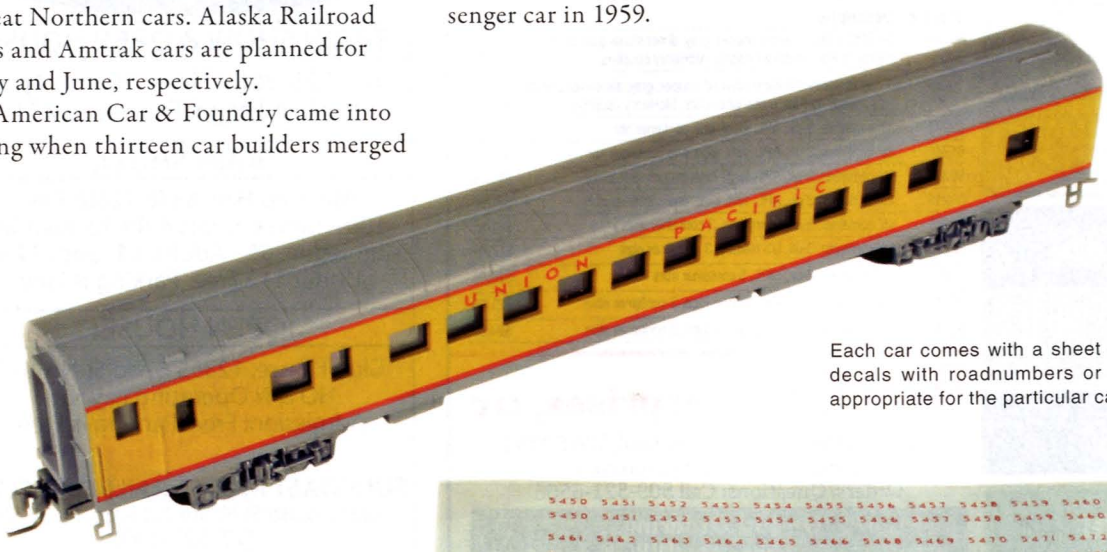
Micro-Trains new passenger fleet includes four different cars: a 5450-series coach, a sleeper, a baggage car, and a 9000-series dome lounge car. All are based on prototypes built by American Car & Foundry between 1942 and 1957.

MICRO-TRAINS has delivered the first release of their new Z-scale American Car & Foundry Smoothside 85-foot Passenger Cars. Decorated for the Union Pacific, the series includes a 44-seat coach, a dome observation car, a sleeper, and a combination baggage/mail car. The cars should be at your favorite Micro-Trains reseller. A second release was issued in February decorated for the Illinois Central. This month, the folks up in Talent are scheduled to release a set of Great Northern cars. Alaska Railroad cars and Amtrak cars are planned for May and June, respectively.

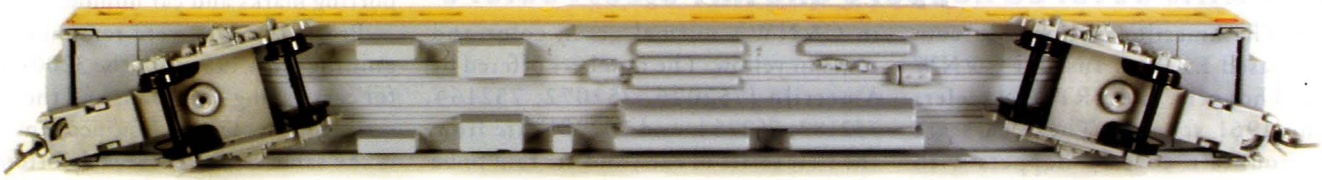
American Car & Foundry came into being when thirteen car builders merged on March 17, 1899. Like everyone else at the time, ACF originally built their railcars primarily from wood, but that changed in 1904 when the company delivered the world's first all-steel passenger car to New York City's Interborough Rapid Transit System. By 1912, all ACF passenger cars were built of steel. The company grew to become one of the leading suppliers of railroad passenger cars. Following a period of diversification, the company changed its name to ACF Industries in 1954 and built its last passenger car in 1959.

The Prototypes

The new Micro-Trains products are based on four different types of cars built from 1942 to 1957. The earliest of the group is the sleeper car. Its prototype was one of 60 delivered in 1942, just before American Car & Foundry converted its factories to wartime production. Four more were ordered after the war and were delivered in 1949. Called a "6-6-4" because it had six roomettes, six open sections, and four double bedrooms, the car was part of Union Pacific's "American"



Each car comes with a sheet of water-slide decals with roadnumbers or car name as appropriate for the particular car.



Underbody detail is all molded-on but all the significant items are there.

series. Pullman-Standard also built similar cars for the "American" series.

The coach is a replica of the 44-seat coaches delivered in 1953 and 1954 to fill a 38-car order from UP. The cars were numbered from 5450 to 5487. With fewer seats than a typical coach, the 5450-series cars offered more room for passengers to recline and stretch out.

One of the favorite cars of Union Pacific passengers was the dome lounge car with its elevated seats and panoramic view. It was also the only place on the train other than the cab of the lead locomotive that you could look out the front. The Micro-Trains observation car is based on those built in a fifteen-car order UP placed with ACF in 1952. The cars, numbered 9000 to 9014, were delivered over a three-month period in 1955. The cars had 37-passenger lounges and a bar. They were originally delivered as square-ended lounge cars. In fact, they were almost the only squared-ended lounge-observation cars ever built. They were modified for mid-train service in 1956 and the Micro-Trains car is based on the post-rebuild version.

The newest of the cars is the 71-foot baggage car. It's based on the cars produced by ACF in 1957 for a fifteen-car order. These cars were used for passenger baggage, express shipments, and mail storage.

The Models

The Micro-Trains passenger cars are nicely rendered replicas of the originals. The tooling is crisp and the paint and printing, as you'd expect, are up to Micro-Trains' lofty standards. Most of the detailing is molded into the various components. This includes the equipment and plumbing on the underside. It looks a bit washed out in the photo, but that's because Z-scale details are too small to cast much of a shadow. The four-wheel trucks are beautiful, though, capturing the look of the real car's lightweight aluminum trucks.

The cars measure out to be pretty close to correct, based on manufacturer's drawings. The 85-foot cars actually scale out to about 86.2 feet long over the buffers. The width is right at the prototypical ten feet but the 14.63-foot height is about nine scale inches too tall. The baggage car is about two-feet nine-inches longer than its prototype. The length over the buffers is within an inch of what the prototype measured over the coupler pulling faces.

Other than some simulated seats on the dome car, the Micro-Trains passenger cars do not have interiors nor do they have any provision for interior lighting.

The cars rolled easily on both Micro-Trains and Märklin track and I had no trouble with reliable coupling to my test locomotive. However, as is true in every scale, these long cars need wider radius curves. I tried them on some 5.5-inch-radius Märklin track and they handled them fairly well, but the overhang was so great the cars got caught on scenery and you can forget about running them through curved cuts and tunnels unless you add a lot of extra clearance. In addition, there was some trouble with the cars becoming uncoupled in tight turns, especially when backing. Besides, these cars look much better on broad curves.

One interesting touch that Micro-Trains has added is roadnumbers and car names. Since several cars of a particular type would be in any given train, Micro-Trains has not printed cars numbers on their models. Instead, they have supplied a small water-slide decal sheet with each car with a range of appropriate numbers and names.

Better Move Quick!

These new cars are so nice that I wish Micro-Trains would upgrade their F7 locomotive with a drive like the one they used for their very nice GP9. It would look great to have a couple of UP F-units pulling a consist of these cars, especially when you consider how many cars were in a typical passenger train in those days.

As with anything Micro-Trains, you need to move quickly to get the cars you want. Pre-orders on the Amtrak cars, the last in the series, closed on December 31, 2008, so your best bet is going to be your favorite hobby retailer. Check them out next time you're at the train store.

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New N Scale Product Announcements from DeLuxe

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Kit #300 – Builds both versions

More Ready-To-Place Coming Soon:
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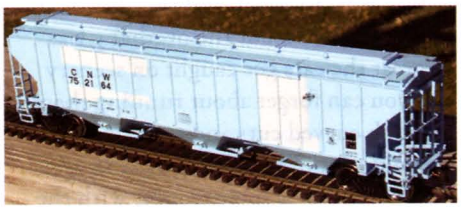
New C&NW covered hoppers and ART steel reefers

HO — The Amerillo Railroad Museum has released Ex-Rock Insland C&NW covered hoppers, and ART steel reefers in the 1961 scheme. These cars are Intermountain covered hoppers with metal running boards and Kadee #5 couplers.



The C&NW picked up over 1600 ex-Rock Island covered hoppers built by United States Railroad Equipment Supply, Pullman Standard, and Thrall. Of these, a little over 1,000 were built by Pullman Standard and renumbered into three series; 752000 – 752488, 752500 – 752978, and 753500 – 753685. A large number of these cars were quickly renumbered from their original Rock Island series and given a minimal paint job that consisted of marking out the original Rock Island markings with white paint, applying the new C&NW series numbers, and added a small C&NW herald. Many are still found today in this patchwork scheme.

The extent of the patchwork varied among the cars, but it always presented a sharp contrast to the faded Rock Island blue background. Some were repainted in C&NW's normal green color and some in yellow. The numbers offered by Amerrilo (752026, 752072, 752164, 752182, 752254, and 752281) are from the first series of cars, and are said to be correct for this scheme.

As an added feature Intermountain added a side stiffening rib on the top of the car side that was common on a number of these Pullman-Standard cars, and is not found on Intermountain's stock Pullman Standard covered hopper models. The cars sell for $31.95 each.

Also available are ice-bunker reefers that depict the prototype used by the American Refrigerator Transit Company from circa 1951 to the early 1960s. They represent cars that had been upgraded with electric air-circulating fans.

The new models are lettered with Missouri Pacific Lines buzzsaw emblems and Wabash flags applied to the right side of the door. On the left side of the car, the MoPac emblem is closest to the B end and Wabash flag closest to the door, while on the opposite side the locations are reversed. The A.R.T. shield was moved to the left of the door centered over the reporting marks and car number.

Prototype cars were renumbered beginning circa 1951 into the 32000 series for cars having Preco fans and the 33000 series for cars having Equipco fans. This is the same model previously offered in the as-built scheme for cars built 1939 to 1944 and numbered 24000 – 24449.

Assembled models come lettered with five different numbers (32019, 32055, 32079, 32140, and 32197) with Kadee #5 couplers, and metal wheels. The Preco fan control part was inadvertently left off the assembled model by the Intermountain Railway Co., manufacturer of the models, but the part has been included in the box with the model and is easy to install. The Preco electric fan control was installed only on the left side of the car adjacent to the left bolster on the side sill. Kits come painted and lettered but without any car numbers, build dates, or reweigh stencil dates. A decal set is included with each kit that provides a selection of 32000- and 33000-series car numbers, build dates, and reweigh and repack data from which to choose. Refer to the Missouri Pacific Historical Society's Winter 2003 Eagle for history and photos of the cars. The reefer is available as a kit for $18.95, and assembled for $29.95. Texas Residents must add 8.25% sales tax.

Amarillo Railroad Museum, P. O. Box 31105, Amarillo, TX 79120; 806-353-3333; E-mail: amarillomuseum@aol.com; www.amarillorailmuseum.com

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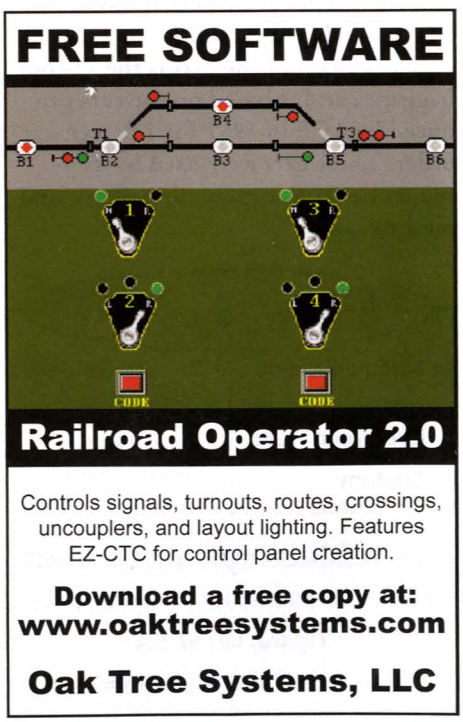
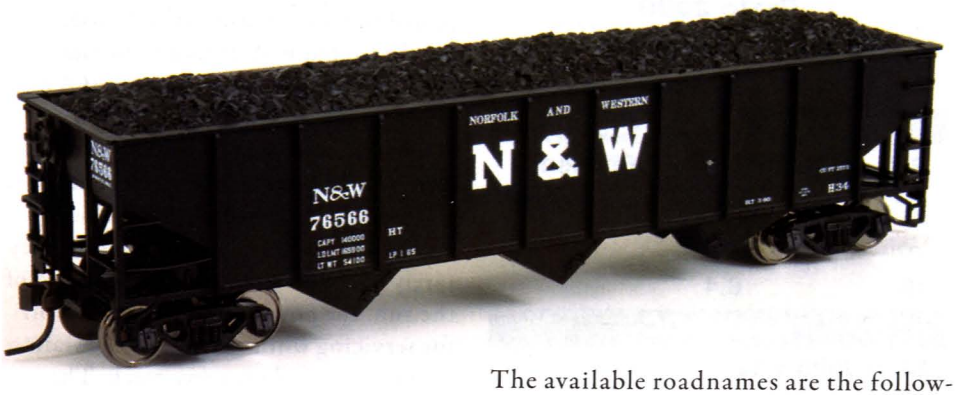


New Trainman freight cars from Atlas



HO — Atlas has released their newest Trainman freight cars. Thrall 4750 and a 70-ton 3-bay hopper. The cars feature true scale dimensions with accurate details, weighted, detailed underframes, AccuMate knuckle couplers, and trucks equipped with free-rolling metal wheels.

The available roadnames are the following: CNW (#0046) grain car three pack (Thrall 4750 hoppers), and N&W (#0047) coal hopper three pack (70 ton 3-bay hoppers). The suggested retail price is $39.95 each.

Atlas, 378 Florence Ave, Hillside, NJ 07205-1102; 908-687-0880; Fax: 908-687-8857; www.atlasrr.com

New HEPX 200 Schnabel car from Concept Models

HO — Concept Models has announced the release of the HEPX 200 Schnabel car, a Canadian prototype. The loads and truck frames are sold separately. There are no wheelsets. Coupler pockets are provided for compatibility with most commonly used couplers. The car and loads are easily assembled using ACC cement (Krazy Glue). Two large transformer loads and a cradle have been created for this car.

The models consist of resin castings and assembly hardware. Hand grabs, ladders, and related detailing are not provided. Instructions are all photo illustrated by an experienced technical writer.

The suggested retail price of the HEPX 200 car kit is $120.00, and $39.99 for the load and cradle.

Concept Models, 44609 W. Canyon Creek Dr., Maricopa, AZ 85239-5019; E-mail: concept_models@con-sys.com; www.con-sys.com

New S-scale trolley from Pennsylvania Heritage Models Ltd.

S — Pennsylvania Heritage Models Ltd. is releasing a new trolley for S gaugers. The model should be available by the time you read this and will be offered in an unpainted version or painted with a tan roof, cream windows, and a green or orange bottom. No photos of the trolley were available at press time.

PHM has stated the trolley is being made available for layouts using DC, AC single direction, and AC with sequence reverse power. An optional DC chassis with under the floor Black Beetles will be available shortly. The interior is lighted and the car comes with reversing headlights and tail lights.

The trolley retails for $165.00 unpainted for DC or AC single direction, and the painted version is $185.00.

Pennsylvania Heritage Models Ltd., 715 Ridgeway Rd, Birdsboro, PA 19508-9722; 610-856-1166; www.paheritagemodels.com

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REVIEW HO

Walthers finishes their *Hiawatha* passenger train at both ends

Locos, Dome, and Skytop Lounge cap series

Review and Photos by John Sipple
Modeling assistance by Dave Carr

Hiawatha Super Dome car, MSRP: $49.98
Hiawatha Skytop Lounge, MSRP: $49.98
Hiawatha E8A diesel A-A set, Both units with DCC/DC/Sound, MSRP: $429.98

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By-The-Numbers

EMD E7A - 18A
Proto 2000
HO 1:87 • Type: Diesel
Traction Tires? No

Pull Power (Ozs @ Full Slip)

Pull	÷ Loco Wt	= Efficiency
5.1	19.1	26.7%
Volts	Amps	
16	0.4	

Analog DC

Start Volts = 12

Volts	Amps	Scale MPH
12.0	0.17	1
13.5	0.19	15
16.0	0.30	45

DCC

Stall Amps (if applicable)

Speed	Step (of 128)	Scale MPH
Min	1	1
Mid	63	42
Top	126	90

WE STARTED this series with the first two cars in the magnificent *Twin Cities Hiawatha*, and now we arrive at the final destination with the remaining two cars and a pair of top line diesel pullers. This was a train in real life that had luxury and attitude, and people gathered at grade crossing just to watch it streak by. Now you can have it, in all its glory, on your own layout.

The Locomotives

The Chicago, Milwaukee, St. Paul, and Pacific Railroad — also known as the Milwaukee Road — was an enchanting railroad, in part because it was so odd. While it was a granger road running all around the northern Midwest, it also snaked a line over the Rockies and into Puget Sound. In the worst section of the mountains, the railroad used electricity and famous electric locomotives. It dealt with the rest of the road according to conditions.

In 1941, the road bought a couple of EMD E6A units that served them well. They used them on their "race track," as brass sometimes called the run between Chicago and the Twin Cities of Minneapolis-St. Paul.

Since we are modeling the 1955 *Twin Cities Hiawatha*, we'll ignore the trios of Erie-builts used on their Pacific line and concentrate on the machinery that pulled the Twin Cities. In this case, they purchased ten E7A units and numbered them in A-B pairs starting with 16A and B and going up to 20A and B. I must emphasize that both the A-and B-units were actually cabbed A-type locomotives.

In effect, they had a 4,000 horse locomotive with a cab at each end, since they rarely uncoupled the pair. At each end of the run, the power would be broken off for servicing while the rest of the train would be turned on a wye track. The locomotives, on the other hand, rarely got turned. Later, when the Milwaukee collaborated with Union Pacific from Omaha to Chicago, they would have A-B-B lashups that would be turned with the train on the wye. But these would be painted in UP's gray and yellow.

The final passenger cars

Name passenger trains could be loosely grouped into two categories by the mid-fifties: those that offered dome service and those that didn't. Understand that dome cars were closed at night, and a chain with a sign prohibited passengers from going up there. Thus, a night train such as the *Twentieth Century Limited* on the New York Central had no use for domes, since you'd only get a bit of daylight at each end. Also, domes raised the height of the car beyond the Central's strict Plate C heights.

But it wasn't just having a dome car in a consist that might turn the trick for you. It often came down to how many domes and what type they were. Regular dome cars covered about a third of the car's length, approximately in the middle. Great domes ran the full length of the car.

One challenge that faced dome

It's not just a model, it's a piece of history.

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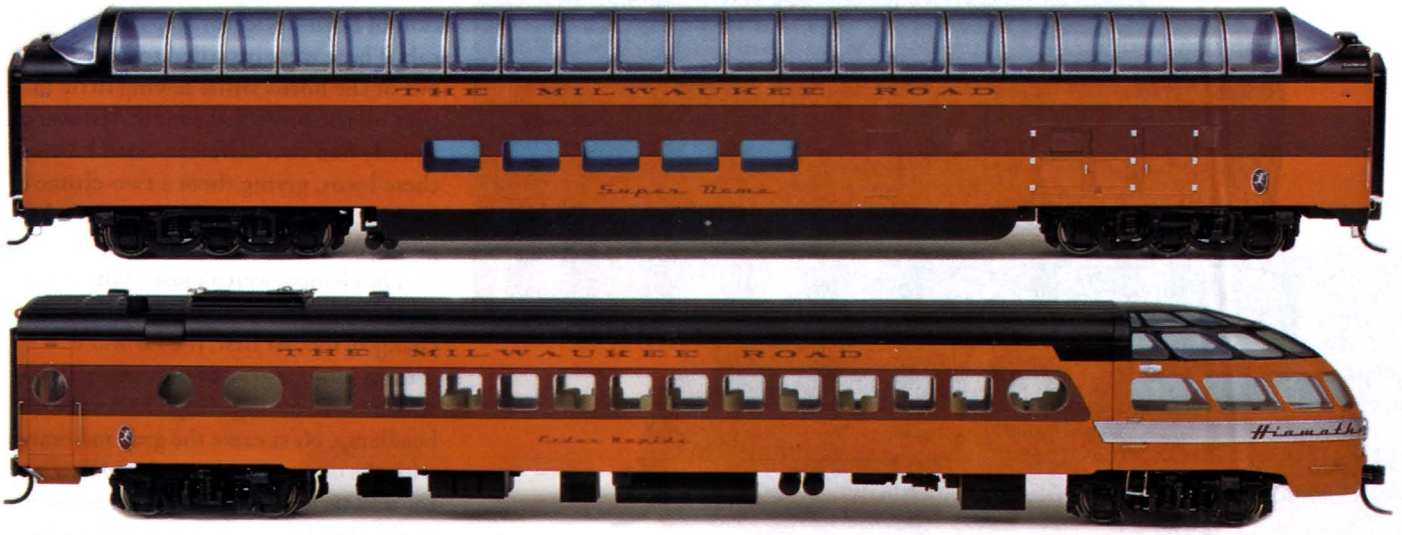

The fantastic "Super Dome" is on top, complete with six-wheel trucks and interior seating you can see, down through the windows. Downstairs is the lounge section. The Skytop Lounge brings up the end of the train — in style! Anyone riding in this car had plenty to talk about upon returning home.

builders was the choice of glazing. If you intended to use curved glass of some sort, it would be cheaper and easier to seal if you used plexiglass. Unfortunately, this plastic type of clear material not only warped the image passing through the curved part, it got scuffed fairly easily and had to be replaced at intervals. True glass was either formed flat or only mildly curved, but it was optically better and resisted scuffing.

Milwaukee's famous "Skytop Lounge" was a masterpiece of faceted glazing, having windows at various angles, but all of them made of flat pieces of glass that gave a superlative view not only out of the side, but also up to see tall mountains and blue skies. When you rode one of the *Hiawathas*, a lucky person might get a seat back in the Skytop Lounge and enjoy a trip to rave about for months afterward.

Walthers' Dome and Lounge

It took a while for Walthers to deliver the final cars of the 1955 *Twin Cities Hiawatha*. As the real Milwaukee discovered, getting great domes and skytop lounges properly glazed is no small feat of engineering. The results are well worth the wait, however.

Couplers have been better this time around. Because one coupler will hit the diaphragm of the adjoining car, you can't separate them by simply lifting one car. I found they came apart beautifully by using an uncoupling magnet.

Walthers' E7A locomotives

I opened the box and took out the pair of locomotives. They came in Proto 2000 boxes, shrinkwrapped to preserve the pairs in your hobby shop. Our pair is from right in the middle, 18A and 18B. The only difference between these locomotives is the "A" and "B" in the number boards. Those, thankfully, are properly white lettered to be as visible in the day without the lights on as they are at night with the lights. More about that in a minute.

When I opened the flap on the first box, I got déjà vu all over again. The chassis was down below and the locomotive shell was above. The chassis seemed to be held in position with T-bones of old, and I prepared myself to install the couplers. It didn't happen. When I coaxed the snug-fitting chassis out of the styrofoam packing, the T-bones fell away and there she was, couplers at the ready. Good for you, Proto 2000!

There is much work to be done on the nose. There's a pilot shell to be attached, and I'd glue that puppy on, but only after I made some life-changing decisions. There are inserts to the pilot shell coupler hole that model the closed coupler doors, model a D-hole, or you can go with nothing at all. There is also a Delrin cut bar assembly to attach, not an especially easy task. As it turns out, it isn't for the Milwaukee pilot, nor is the D-hole adaptor. We installed the closed doors with no coupler on our lead unit and nothing more than the built-in couplers on the trailing unit.

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From this angle, we can see down into the Super Dome — sort of. The seating actually has burgundy accents that pick up that color from the outside strip. The Skytop Lounge seating wraps around the inside.

Before you even dream of putting the shell on, there is some work to do on the rest of the model. The cab interior sits on the chassis, waiting for you to paint it or ignore it. Two little guys are bagged up for you to install or not. Be sure to remove the entire coupler support mechanism from the lead unit or it may interfere between the turning truck and the body shell.

Not a big problem but a pointless one is the installation of the light shield. No one is running without it, since the light from the four LEDs (Mars, headlight, and number boards) would flood the tracks below the pilot in a most unprototypical fashion. Fortunately, it goes in with two screws and even I can do it.

The main body shell is wonderfully tooled and beautifully painted and decorated. The Milwaukee ran these horses fast and usually had the lead units coupler pilot doors closed. They were changed over the years, going for the minimal, side-facing number boards with class lights pointing forward to a number board ahead of that, angled to be visible from front and side, and finally, rebuilding the nose to eliminate the old, defunct number board housing and adopting an angled, projecting box-type.

With this change also came the addition of horn-deflector flaps on top of the cab. These were installed to keep bugs out of the horns while having little impact on the projected sound. Milwaukee usually had two different-sized horns on these locos, giving them a two-chime effect. At times, they'd have two of a kind, giving one very loud "blat."

The changes weren't just to the equipment on the locomotive. The paint job changed, too. At first, the E6 and E7 A-units ran in a gray-over-orange paint scheme with a wingéd logo under the headlamp. Next came the gray and orange, with the orange in a center band down the middle with gray above and below it. In the early fifties, the entire *Hiawatha* program underwent an image change to an orange background with a central band of burgundy red down the middle, and that's where these models are, appropriately. They would hold that color until repainted in gray-and-yellow for UP through service.

DCC Operation

We always face the decision of what to number our DCC decoder address. In the case of these two beauties, the solution is surprisingly easy. I changed the value in CV1 to "18" on both of them. As happened with the Milwaukee's practices, I don't intend to run them separately or involve other locos in this consist. They'll be pulling the gorgeous *Twin Cities Hiawatha* set for a living, and so they will be MUed together.

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Is this a double Skytop Lounge from underneath? No, it's fun with Photoshop in order to illustrate the rear truck issue. The right truck is unmodified and at its full travel, good for perhaps 32 inch radius curves. The left end shows the truck with the rear brakes and hangers nipped off. It now negotiates 18 inch radius curves. Not tried was simply removing the entire coupler system, including the box.

The simplest form of MU is to give both locos the same address. There is no provision in DCC for letters in the addresses (we'll ignore hex in this case) and giving them the same 2-digit address is easy and effective. Send a message to "18" and both respond. If you wish to program one of them separately for some reason, put it on the program track or take the other one off the active track. Since they are Proto 2000 units with high quality motors and their new helical-geared three-axle trucks, they should run very well together.

You may have to press F6 twice to get them to start up and then proceed. By the same token, if you wish to shut them down, press F9 according to your wishes. The three states you can enter are Disconnect, Stand-by, and Total Shut Down. The disconnect is reached by a double-press of F9, disconnecting the motor drive but leaving the sound system functioning normally. In this mode, you could rev up the engine to pump up the trainline pressure. A second double press takes you into Standby, where the disconnect remains plus the engine goes into low idle, and the sound no longer responds to the throttle. A third double-press shuts down the sound completely, and you hear the cab door being open and shut as the engineer leaves.

To activate the locomotive, simply double-press F6 and it starts right up, beginning with the arrival of the engineer and proceeding through the start up of both engines. While you can jump the gun and start rolling right away, I like to let this start-up proceed, as it will on both locomotives at once, thanks to them being on the same address.

Each unit by itself will deliver one scale mile per hour performance on speed step one. While you may not wish to run your loco at that speed, if you set your momentum on both locos to around 10 (on a scale of 255), you can twist your throttle to speed step 35 and watch it smoothly and gradually start and stop. If you want more gradual starts, go to 20 in CV3 and 10 in CV4. The results are just beautiful.

The throttle ramps up nicely when you increase the speed. When you're operating up a grade, you can turn on the "heavy load" mode by pressing F9. A short toot of the horn tells you Heavy Load is on. Press F9 at the top of the hill and the loco toots twice to let you know Heavy Load is off. If you have programmed in momentum, the engine will sound as though it's drifting downgrade. Hit F5 and turn on dynamic brake sounds until you get to the bottom.

Top speed under DCC for these models is around 90 scale miles per hour (SMPH). Since the prototypes were generally good for that speed, and the mid-speed was around forty, there's nothing that needs changing here. Now, if you operate both locos on the same address, they'll both respond to horn and bell presses, and both will shine their headlights, though the lights in reverse go into a dimmed mode.

If you wish to turn off the horn and bell in your perpetual rear unit, you can plug CV 49 with 0 for the bell or 8 for the horn and then set CV52 to 0, shutting it off. This is indexed programming and is rather annoying, but if you use Decoder Pro, that helps make it easier. You can turn on or shut off the number board at F11, turn off the headlight at F0, and the Mars light will go to steady when the unit is operated in reverse.

Since both locos hear the same commands and you may have one set up with a closed pilot and no front coupler to be your perpetual lead unit, you may want to go into the programming of lights and change the rear unit to have no lights lit whatever, since they usually ran dark.

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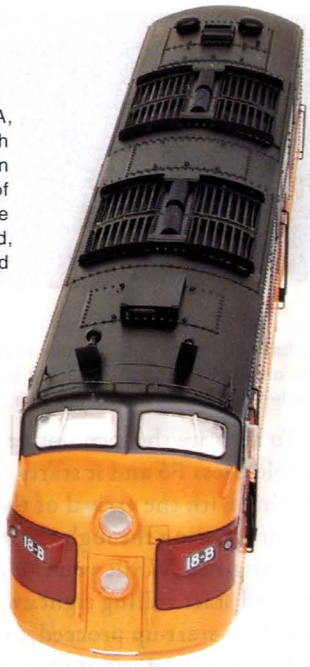

On the left is the chassis of an E8A, and on the right is the shell, still with its styrofoam insert inside. In between is the pilot and a couple of bags of stuff to install, some of it optional. The item in the back is the light shield, which isn't optional and so should have been installed at the factory.

DC Operation

DC operation is the same as it always has been for auto-sensing DC Sound operation. Enough power has to be applied to first trip the current sensor to either DC or DCC (or there's enough AC leaked into my DC supply to fool me.) Once that is established, then enough power must be added to start and operate the sound system, not a small task. Then comes the requirement to actually move the locomotive. This comes as low as eight volts and has gone as high as 13 in tests of some dual-mode sound decoders.

For this model, the starting voltage is rather high, at 12 volts, and at the top voltage for the decoder—16 volts—the top speed comes to 45 SMPH. At 13.5 volts, the most many power supplies deliver for HO, I was only getting about 15 smph out of this model.

I started the pull testing under DC and found the model would produce around 4.2 ounces of pull from its 19.1 ounces of weight. Under DCC, this stepped up to just over five ounces of pull, in part due to higher speed operation. Two together would equal around ten ounces, more than enough to pull a very long passenger train.

Hiawatha cars in operation

Rounding up this series of cars, I would say Walthers has definitely improved the couplers, didn't need to improve the wheels, and should improve the handrail installation by doing them in the factory. Accurately detailed Nystrom trucks on those cars that rode on them is just another point in favor.

The Great Dome was a heavy car and rode on six-wheel trucks. This is the most restrictive car of the set, and so I sent it around the loops of track until it either negotiated 18 inches successfully or derailed repeatedly. The locos passed the final test, coupled to each other and pulling the rest of the train. It looks kind of goofy, given the extreme overhang, but it works.

Unfortunately, the Great Dome wouldn't pass anything less than a 27-inch radius and the Skytop Lounge even had troubles with the 30-inch curves! On both cars, the problem is that the brake shoe and hanger hits the coupler box. I did some strategic nipping with the Skytop's rear truck and suddenly it negotiates 18-inch curves. I haven't done anything to the Great Dome, yet, since it may end up living where there are no curves less than 27 inches.

And so we close...

This is the end of the *Twin Cities Hiawatha* series from Walthers. The run was halted when it came to the dome and Skytop cars, but the series is finished, and it's an accomplishment many will love to own. We've enjoyed this project and the visit back to 1955, the period this train models.

Here's a couple of glamour girls. On top is #18B, which has its doors closed, while #18A below operates perpetually in reverse with bells and lights silent and all lighting dark, coupler reaching out of the nose to take its train. The grilles behind the cab doors are the easy spotting feature for the E7A.

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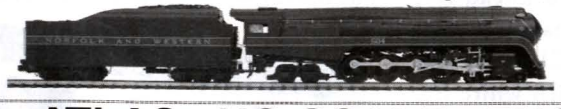

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Micro-Trains releasing Kodachrome diesels in Z New freight released for Z, N, and HOn3

Z, N, HOn3 — Micro-Trains is releasing new Kodachrome GP-35s in Z scale along with new freight cars for Z, N, and HOn3. The newly released models are fully assembled and are available now.

Z Scale

A 40-foot standard boxcar with plug door has been released for New Hampshire. This is the ninth car of a 50-car series representing each of the 50 states in the union. It bears the Purple Finch and Lilac flower, New Hampshire's official state bird and flower. The flag of the state of New Hampshire is in the background. The roadnumber, 1788, represents the year 'The Granite State' was admitted into the union. The boxcar (#502 00 509) retails for $22.95.

Two 70-foot Gunderson well cars have been released for Northwestern Oklahoma numbers NOKL 210110 and 210152. The cars are painted boxcar red with white logos and lettering. They were built by the Gunderson Company of Portland, OR and run on Roller Bearing trucks. The Husky-Stack was a single well double-stack container car first introduced at the 1990 International Intermodal Expo in Atlanta, GA. The design allowed "cars" to be made up of single wells, or with simple modifications to be drawbar connected to create a multi-unit car. The well cars (#540 00 081 & #540 00 082) are $36.45 each.

New Southern Pacific/Santa Fe Kodachrome diesels have been released this month. The GP-35 powered locomotives are painted red and yellow with black roof, red stripe, and yellow lettering. SP 6533 was built as part of EMD order number 7695 for the Southern Pacific railroad in 1964; ATSF 2858 was built as part of EMD order number 7786-9 for the ATSF railroad in 1965 and originally wore the number 1358. They both wear the SPSF merger paint scheme commonly called Kodachrome. In the early 1980s, locomotives from both the SP and ATSF were painted in this paint scheme in anticipation of a merger between Southern Pacific and Atchison, Topeka & Santa Fe. In 1985, the ICC denied the merger and the railroads began returning the locos to their standard paint. The Southern Pacific (#981 01 150) and the Santa Fe (#981 01 160) geeps retail for $195.95 each.

Two New Haven 50-foot standard boxcars with double doors have been released painted McGinnis Orange with black sills; they bear black and white logos and are lettered in white. Cars NH 40500 and 40502 were built in November 1956 by Pullman Standard and run on Bettendorf trucks. Only 15 double door cars were delivered to New Haven by Pullman Standard in that month. Series 40500 – 40514 came equipped with double Youngstown doors. Pullman Standard sold the remaining cars to the Chesapeake & Ohio complete with NH appliances. The boxcars (#506 00 241 & #506 00 242) retail for $25.90 each.

N Scale

New BC Rail 61-foot bulkhead flat cars with covered wood loads are now available. Car numbers BOCL 11211 and 11216 are painted green with white BC Rail logos and white lettering. They were built in June 1980 and run on Barber Roller Bearing trucks. In 1984, the British Columbia Railway was financially restructured creating BC Rail Ltd. On July 15, 2004, Canadian National (CN) purchased the railway and leased the right of way for BC Rail. The original lease of the rail right of way was for 60 years with a 30 year option to renew. The British Columbian government retains the option of buying back all of the assets from CN at renewal. The flat cars (#054 00 171 & #054 00 172) are $22.35 each.

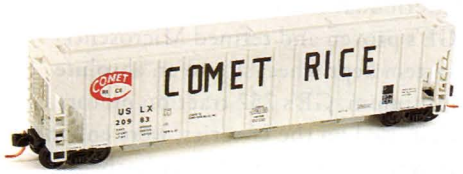
A 50-foot standard boxcar with plug and sliding door and no roofwalk has been released for Denver & Rio Grande Western 63136. The car is painted orange with black ends and aluminum roof. It is lettered in black. This boxcar was built in June 1968, serviced in September 1977, and runs on Roller Bearing trucks. It has a combination eight-foot sliding door and seven-foot auxiliary plug door. Most of D&RGW's combination door cars were used in general service. The 15-foot total opening also made them adaptable for hauling wallboard and forest products. The boxcar (#076 00 100) retails for $21.65.

A Wisconsin Southern 50-foot standard boxcar with double plug doors and no roofwalk is available painted blue with white logo and lettering. It was built in October 1972 and runs on Roller Bearing trucks. This Wisconsin Southern is a one-of-a-kind boxcar from series 503005 – 503191. Car number WSOR 503175 is an actual freight car and was chosen to be decorated in honor of *Model Railroader Magazine's* 75th anniversary (1933 to 2008). The boxcar (#075 00 160) is $21.30.

The seventh car in the Presidential series has been released, this one in honor of Andrew Jackson (1829 – 1837).

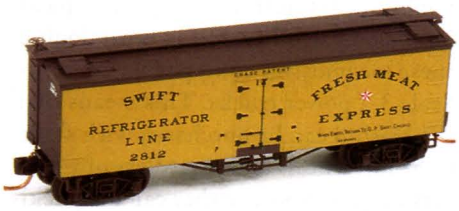
The 40-foot standard boxcar with plug door and no roofwalk bears the portrait President Jackson. The car comes with a commemorative pin replicated from that era. Jackson considered himself a president for the common people. He left a legacy of a strong presidency, and his assertion that the president represents the will of the people and not that of special interests created the mandate for future presidents and politicians. The boxcar (#074 00 107) is available for $23.95.

An 89-foot tri-level open auto rack has been released for Frisco/TTX painted yellow with black logo and lettering. Car number TTEX 913609 was built in January 1964 by Bethlehem Steel and runs on Barber Roller Bearing trucks. Open rack cars gradually became extinct due to problems with damage and vandalism while in transit; however, these cars were greatly responsible for securing a vast amount of the automobile delivery traffic that had been previously lost during the boxcar era. The auto rack (#112 00 160) retails for $28.95.



A Comet Rice Mills three-bay Evans covered hopper is available painted gray with red and white logo and black lettering. Car USLX 20983 was built in March 1981 by Evans Products Co. and runs on Barber roller bearing trucks. Evans was a supplier of freight cars, parts, loading devices, and freight car kits. Prolific from 1966 until 1982, they built over 37,000 freight cars. An innovative company, their loading devices revolutionized how freight is shipped; they are primarily responsible for the development of the coil steel car design still being built today. The hopper (#099 00 070) is available for $19.15.

A 34-foot wood-sheathed caboose with straight cupola is available for Rock Island. Painted boxcar red with black and white logo and white lettering, car number RI 18308 was built in June 1938 and runs on swing motion caboose trucks. Caboose use has declined and is seldom seen on trains, except on locals and smaller railroads. The caboose provided the train crew with a shelter at the rear of the train. The caboose also provided minimal living quarters for longer trips and served to protect the end of the train when stopped. Cabooses were non-revenue equipment and were often improvised or retained well beyond the normal lifetime of a freight car. The caboose (#051 00 140) is $20.25.



A Swift Refrigerator Line 36-foot wood-sheathed ice reefer has been reprinted for car number 2812. The car is painted boxcar red with yellow sides, and bears a black "Fresh Meat Express" with red and white star logo. It was built in the late 1890s and runs on Arch Bar trucks. The reefer was not the invention of the railroads or meatpackers, but the result of inventive minds such as Gustavus Swift in the late 1800s. Swift began as a butcher's apprentice and rose to become one of the country's most prominent meat barons. When the reefers were introduced to the meat packing industry, they were instantly welcomed as a profitable alternative to shipping live animals in stock cars. The reefer (#058 00 010) retails for $23.30.

HOn3

A 30-foot flat car with wood stack load has been released for Nevada Narrow Gauge Railroad painted boxcar red with white lettering; it runs on Bettendorf trucks. Car number 155 was originally built in 1900 by American Car & Foundry for Nevada-California-Oregon Railway. The Nevada County Narrow Gauge Railroad began operations in 1876 to provide reliable year-round transportation to the rich mining districts of western Nevada County, CA. During sixty-six years of operation, it hauled out more than $200,000,000 of gold while bringing in mining machinery, lumber, petroleum products, and all of the essentials necessary to maintain the thriving county. The flat car (#855 00 040) is available for $35.30.

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REVIEW O

Premier Line Techno Toasters: MTH Brings Third Generation GE Motive Power to O Gauge

Review and Photos by David Otte

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IN November of 1987, a glistening Armour Yellow and Harbor Mist Gray-painted Union Pacific number 9100 rolled out of General Electric's Erie, Pennsylvania shops and with it dawned the third generation of North America's diesel era. The Dash 8-40C was the culmination of a quarter of a century's work by GE, beginning with the U25B, to gain the lead in diesel-electric motive power production over longtime rival General Motors' Electro Motive Division.

The initial horsepower race between the two competitors continued throughout the 1960s and 1970s until the railroad industry began stressing reliability and fuel efficiency at the top of their shopping lists. GE summarily countered with their Dash 7 lineup and the well-received C30-7 in 1976 that went head to head with EMD's problem-plagued SD50 model and later SD60 series. However, there was no stopping GE. With momentum building and banking on their extensive research and development in the areas of prime mover enhancements and computerized controls, the company finally broke the invisible sales barrier with their introduction of the Dash 8 series propelling them to the number one spot. The Dash 8 would eventually evolve into the very popular Dash 9 and the next generation's environmentally friendly ES44DC.

MTH Electric Trains recently released an O-gauge model of this groundbreaking locomotive in its Premier product line. These 1/48-scale Techno Toasters, as railfans called this well-known appliance manufacturer's hi-tech Dash 8 series, are available decorated for four of the original purchasers: Chicago & North Western, CSX Transportation, UP, and Norfolk Southern. Each paint scheme is available in three different roadnumbers for powered units and a single roadnumber for non-powered units.

Furthermore, and reflecting today's hobbyists' interest in more prototypical 2-rail compatibility, MTH is cataloging these locomotives equipped with Proto-Scale 3-2 power trucks. This means that the Dash-8 can be purchased with scale or hi-rail wheels and regardless of which version you choose, either can be quickly configured for operation on 2- or 3-rail track and powered by AC or DC power supplies. The scale-wheeled versions feature fixed pilots and longer pilot handrails for an even more authentic look. However, 2-rail Digital Command Control (DCC) operators should note that command operation is still limited to MTH's proprietary Digital Command System (DSC) at this time.

The GE and MTH Dash 8: A Close-up Comparison

GE's Dash 8 lineup actually included four-axle models and six-axle versions with wide North American cabs as well as full-cowl carbodies for Canadian roads, but MTH's current release is limited to the standard cab arrangement of which GE produced some 581 copies between 1987 and 1992. The UP was by far the biggest supporter of the Dash 8-40C, or, as many railroads designated them, C40-8s, with 256 units on the roster. They were followed by CSX with 147, C&NW with 77, NS with 75, and Conrail with 25. The majority of these units remain in service today.

The big news with the introduction of the Dash 8 series was its microprocessor controls, which constantly evaluated and adjusted the various auxiliary systems, such as cooling and air supply, to maximize the horsepower available for traction. This design provided consistent high horsepower, 4,000 to be exact, all the time as necessary on high-speed intermodal trains or on long coal drags. GE's proven and refined Microsentry system kept wheel slip to an absolute minimum. GE's 752 traction motors, first used on the U-series, were enhanced to reinforce this effort. Similarly, the 16-cylinder 7FDL prime mover, the same engine series that also powered the U-boats of the 1960s, was fine-tuned to perfection by GE not only to meet the new horsepower rating, but at the same time to increase fuel efficiency by some 20 percent over earlier models and to extend the life of the many engine components. Combined, these attributes

MTH's newest Premier six-axle diesel is certainly a big boy weighing in at nearly 7 pounds and stretching a scale 66-feet 9-inches long over the pilots, yet it's still nimble enough to maneuver around O36 diameter curves in 3-rail operation. However, it's a bit gangly looking on such tight radius track and more at home on O72 curves. Paint and lettering is smooth and crisp, adding to the eye-catching detail of this model.

The GE Dash 8-40C rides on GSC/Adirondack three-axle trucks, which have been used on GE's locomotives since the U series of the late 1960s. MTH has followed suit, producing their version of the GE sideframe in diecast metal and enhancing it with separately applied brake cylinders and piping. Note also the minute graphic details MTH has added to the carbody such as the warning placards, US flag, and GE builder's plate, along with the painted crew figure. The rectangular box directly behind the cab is the dynamic brake housing with its two black exhaust vents clearly evident.

offered the railroads the low-cost, reliable operation they sought.

Likewise, the MTH's replica of the Dash 8 provides the modeler with its own similar winning qualities. Let's start with the accuracy of this rendering. Compared to published drawings of the 70-foot 8-inch-long (over the coupler pulling faces) prototype, the model is right on the money in all the major dimensions I checked. The same can be said about the presence of the various hood access and compartment doors, vents, grilles, and so on. The main identifying features of the Dash 8 line are very noticeable on the model, such as the angular cab roof, slanted radiator air intakes on the rear of the carbody, the dynamic brake housing and its associated air intake and exhaust vents directly behind the cab, the air reservoir tanks located within the recessed area on the right side of the fuel tank, and those famous rear wings of the radiator housing. Finally, the model correctly rides on replicas of the GSC/Adirondack trucks.

While the real Dash 8-40Cs weighed in the neighborhood of 400,000 pounds, the MTH C-boat is closer to seven, which is still pretty hefty for the O-scale world. The bulk of this weight comes from the sturdy ABS carbody, stamped steel frame, and diecast metal sideframes, gearboxes, fuel tank, pilots, and couplers. The hoods, cab, and walkways, in particular, feature excellent molded-in details that crisply depict the previously mentioned access doors as well as latches, hinges vent openings, tread plate, and the like. Meanwhile, a plethora of hand-applied parts are on display, such as the numerous grab irons, metal railings, and stamped stanchions (although the stanchions should attach to the side of the frame rather then go underneath), three-chime air horn, cab sunshades, rearview mirrors, antenna, coupler lift bar on the pilots, hand brake wheel, air reservoir tanks, electrical Multiple Unit sockets with red cables, the MU air hoses on the pilot, hood side lift rings, windshield wipers, window glazing, and painted crew figures. Noteworthy are the see-through screens on the engine and radiator air intakes on the car sides and the etched-metal grilles on the roof-top radiator exhaust vents. The trucks also display separately applied brake cylinders and piping.

Of course, all of these characteristics are typical of MTH's current line of Premier locomotives, as was the decoration of our sample, which was lettered for CSX number 7523. This specific prototype was constructed in June of 1989 and is one of 146 C40-8s numbered 7500 – 7646 originally purchased by CSX that are presently still pounding the rails (number 7520 is now off the roster). An additional ten units were acquired from Conrail in 1999.

The Techno Toaster looks splendid in its authentically reproduced YN2 or Bright Future paint scheme, which was introduced by the railroad in 1990. It gets high marks for smooth, opaque paint application and sharp graphics on the carbody — especially for the various safety placards, US flags on the cab sides, and GE builder's plates. On the other hand, I thought the glossy black paint had been applied just a tad bit too thick on the truck sideframes where it had a tendency to pool around some of the smaller details.

As a final note regarding the appearance category, the Dash 8 also includes a consumer-applied snowplow, which was appropriate for our 7523 and

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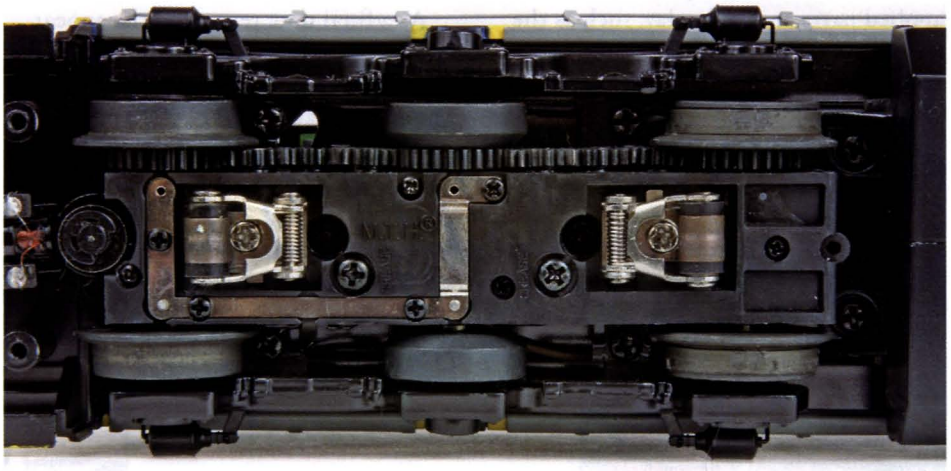
subsequently installed. If I were asked by MTH what additional details they could add to further enhance this model, I might suggest working ditch lights with which most of these C40-8s are currently equipped (although they were not present when these units were first delivered by GE), and the representation of handbrake rigging on the front truck would be nice too.

Nevertheless, the 18-inch-long GE is quite a sight on 2-rail or hi-rail track where it proved to be quite the performer during my testing session. While the prototype's 7FLD-16 engine, 752 series traction motors, and wheel slip technology provided it with a whopping 108,600 pounds of maximum continuous tractive effort at 11 miles per hour and its 83:20 gear ratio a top speed of 70 miles per hour, our hi-rail wheel equipped version had some get up and go to it, too. Following the same drive train design as most O-scale diesels on the market today, the Dash 8 boasts can motors with flywheels vertically mounted to each truck and powering all axles. Factory-installed traction tires mounted on the inside axle's wheels of both trucks aided this model in pulling a very respectable 42 mixed vintage freight train around our large 3-rail test layout, which was configured with minimum O54 curves.

Like GE's microprocessor equipped C-boats, the Proto-Speed Control feature integrated in the model's Proto-Sound 2.0 electronics kept our sample gliding along the rails at a constant speed despite the curves or slight grade it encountered on the test track. In fact, the sample had a fairly accurate speed range of 2 to 82 scale miles per hour. Despite the locomotive's length, this model can negotiate hi-rail curves as tight as O36 diameter thanks to each

The MTH Premier line diesel exhibits numerous add-on details such as the metal hand rail and stanchions, wire formed grab irons, rooftop antenna, metal chain, handbrake wheel, windshield wipers, sunshades, rearview mirrors, illuminated number boards, and a consumer-applied snowplow. Even the cab doors can be opened!



The new Proto-Scale 3-2 truck design allows this MTH engine to run on either 3-rail or 2-rail layouts and involves only a simple change over of wheel sets, removal of the center rail pickups, and a flip of a switch to complete the conversion. On our 3-rail set up, all axles are powered and only the outer wheel sets are flanged so that the model can negotiate tighter radius curves. Traction tires are also utilized on the inside wheel set of each truck providing the engine with ample pulling power.

With the top of the radiator housing removed, the operator can manually adjust both the volume and smoke output, plug in an external charger to rejuvenate the onboard Proto-Sounds 2.0 battery, manipulate the DCS polarity, and choose between 2-rail or 3-rail operation in conjunction with the Proto-Scale 3-2 truck feature. Visible also are the see-through screens on the radiator air intakes and the etched-metal exhaust grilles on the radiator housing. The white disc with black stripes seen inside the carbody is the rear motor's flywheel, which is also utilized by the Proto-Speed function to control the speed of the model.

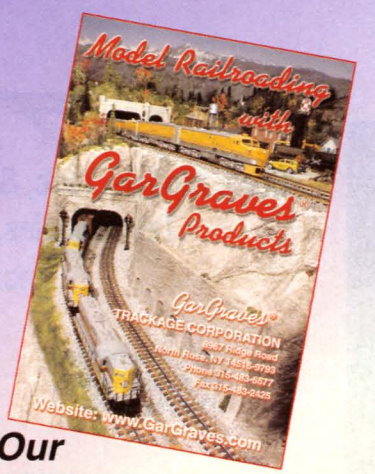
That signature wing-like radiator housing of the Dash 8 series is quite apparent from this rear angle view. There are plenty of add-on details to note here as well, like the metal uncoupler bar, MU electrical cables, and air hoses situated on the pilot, as well as the somewhat oversized diecast metal Proto-Coupler, which can be opened remotely in command mode from the DCS handheld controller.

truck's non-flanged center axle's wheels. However, I personally wouldn't operate it on anything less than O54 due to its awkward appearance and track overhang; O72 diameter curves would be even better.

If the smooth operation of this model doesn't move you, the sound system certainly will. I am continually struck with the strides MTH is making with their Proto-Sound 2.0 system. The last three modern diesel locomotives I have sampled from this company, the SD70MAC, SD70Ace, and now the Dash 8, all have impressed me greatly with each subsequent model outdoing the previous in quality of the audio and realism. The startup sounds of this latest offering are rousing to say the least, as are the horn, bell, diesel roar, brakes, crew chatter, and all the other incidental sounds. Added to this are the bright directional headlights, the voluminous white exhaust bellowing out from the fan driven Proto-Smoke unit, and the "activate anywhere" Proto-Couplers, which, packaged together, have always made MTH trains real crowd pleasers.

A Winning Combination

Well, there are certainly a number of comparisons one can make between the prototype, its advancements for the industry, and the place it secured for GE in the marketplace with the many positive attributes the MTH model brings to the O-gauge world including accurate details, flawless performance, and realistic sounds. Simply put, the C40-8 proved to be a real winner for its builder and I believe this Dash 8 will bear out the same results for its manufacturer too. If you would like to witness this model in action for yourself, check out your local MTH dealer for a demonstration or view a short video presentation of the Dash 8 online at www.mth-railking.com.



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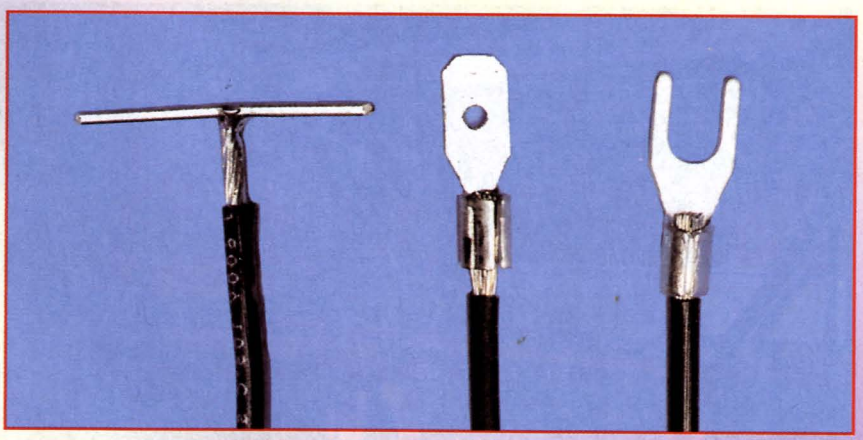

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New Roadnames for PROTO 2000 F-M H10-44 Diesels

HO — Walthers added eight new roadnames to its line of PROTO 2000 F-M H10-44 diesel locomotives. All eight new roadnames are available with sound and DCC, or in standard DC versions.

The H10-44 features a heavy diecast chassis, all-wheel drive and electrical pickup, a five-pole skew-wound motor, dual machined brass flywheels, prototype-specific detailing, PROTO Max magnetic knuckle couplers, constant and directional headlights, and RP-25 contour blackened wheels. They are available with or without factory-installed sound and DCC. Sound can be operated with a standard DC power pack or DCC controllers. Sound features include: OP Diesel Engine, Horn, Bell, Squealing Brakes, Doppler Effect, Air Let Off (in neutral), Headlight, and Trailer which mutes whistle and bell for double heading.

The following roadnames are available with sound and DCC: DRGW (#920-40794 & #920-40795) 122 and 123, N&W (#920-40796 & #920-40797) 2132 and 2133, UP (#920-40798 & #920-40799) 1301 and 1304, Monon (#920-40800) 18, PC (#920-40802 and #920-40803) 8256 and 8260, SLSF (#920-40804 and #920-40805) 274 and 279, Wabash (#920-40806 & #920-40807) 382 and 383, PRR (#920-40809 and #920-40810) 9089 and 9095, and undecorated (#920-40808). The sound/DCC-equipped models retail for $279.98 each.

New roadnames have been added to the Proto 2000 F-M H10-44 diesels from Walthers. The model was reviewed in the February 2009 issue of *MRN*.

These roadnames are available in standard DC: DRGW (#920-47794 & #920-47795) 120 and 121, N&W (#920-47796 & #920-47797) 2127 and 2128, UP (#920-47798 #920-47799) 1301 and 1303, Monon (#920-47800) 18, PC (#920-47802 & #920-47803) 8244 and 8248, SLSF (#920-47804 & #920-47805) 270 and 273, Wabash (#920-47806 & #920-47807) 380 and 381, PRR (#920-47809 & #920-47810) 9083 and 9087, and undecorated (920-47808). The standard DC models retail for $179.98 each.

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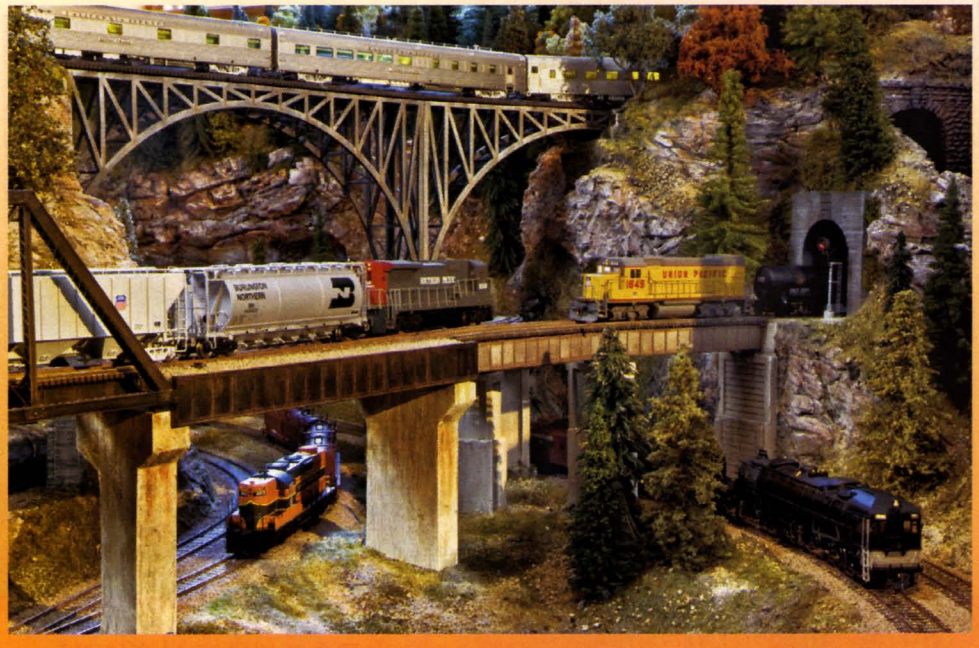

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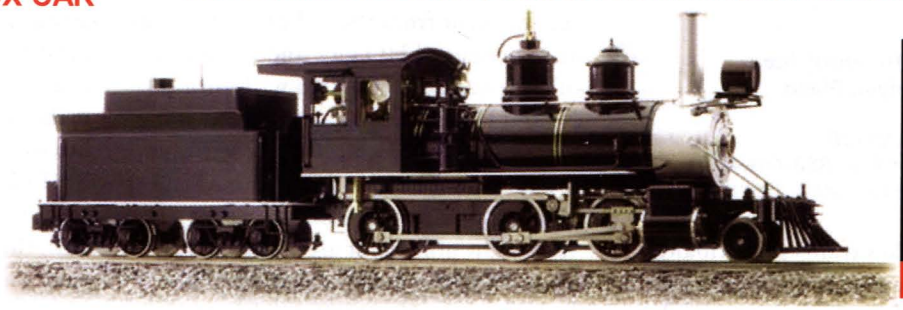

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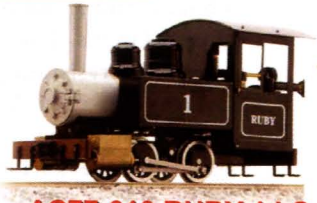

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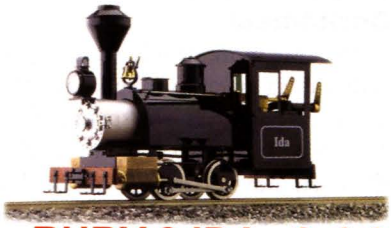

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REVIEW **Large Scale**

Piko's Large Scale Train Set launches railroading out in the garden

Why train Sets aren't just for the holidays

Review and Photos by John Sipple

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The set arrives as on the left, displaying the three cars and the track in windows. On the right is the track set that magnifies your basic train set's circle into about a four by nine foot oval with a siding. While they make a nice presentation, my guess is you'll have the train set outside in the summer and under the tree come Christmas.

PIKO makes trains in Germany and has a wonderful reputation among those fortunate enough to play with their stuff. Here in the United States, they are imported and distributed by Silvergate. In this case, we have a choice of two sets. The UP set consists of an 0-6-0T steam engine pulling a dark red boxcar and a yellow caboose. The NYC set features the same engine decorated for the New York Central pulling around a white, two-bay hopper, and a red caboose.

Why a Train Set? It's not Christmas!

Because more people start into garden railroading when they approach their lawn and garden in the spring of the year. And this make perfect sense. You've got the lawn mowed, annuals planted, the perennials pruned, and you want something to add that touch of zest to your garden or out on your lawn. For a lot less money than building your own putting green, you can have a garden railroad!

This is how I started, way back when. I began with a modest large scale train set and went from there. I came into it as an experienced HO guy, and the world of large-scale is populated with former N- and HO-scale folks, not to mention all of us multiple scalers. However, you can be a complete newbie to model trains and do just fine with this set. So let's start right now, right after you read this. Look over your back yard or wherever and try to imagine sitting in a lawn chair and watching this substantial little train rolling around. Vision the kids and grandkids enjoying this new garden centerpiece.

Piko has come up with a nice, little train set that could be a good starting point for you. Our sample features a dandy 0-6-0T switcher loco that models a small steam locomotive. It pulls a boxcar and a caboose, both of them colorful items. These models are done in weather-resistant plastic, but you'll want to take them in at night and not leave them stationary long in the bright sun; these precautions will help the colors remain vivid. Whether you run on the lawn or knit your track into a rock garden, such brightly-colored cars are eye-catching, creating an attraction that moves.

It would be easy to dismiss the train idea because of fear it would upstage the hard work you've put into your plants. I have found that rather the opposite happens. While the eye and ear are initially attracted to the cute little moving train, most folks follow it around and, in the process, look at the entire garden. They make comments such as, "That little boxwood looks just like a miniature tree," or "I like the old washbucket full of pansies." Like the gnome or the reflecting ball, the train becomes a garden decoration, only one that moves.

Beneath the Trains

By themselves, the trains are useless. What makes them fun is that they run on tracks, giving them a predictable route. The basic kit contains a simple circle of track, some four feet in diameter. I have thrown the track layout down on ordinary grass and off we go! In fact, my first layout ran around on track laid on grass in the back yard for the first couple of years. When I needed to mow the lawn, I took up the track, mowed, and put the track back down. Just try to find a level spot.

To power the train, Piko has included a very nice throttle system. A corded transformer in a sealed box has a pair of terminals to feed the wires included for that purpose. A simple press clip snugly holds the tinned wire end, and the terminals are color-coded. On the controller, you will find a pair of the same colored terminals; just hook them up. Another set of terminals of different colors take the tinned ends of the

The main photo shows the basic set components: a loco in the middle, boxcar on the left, caboose on the right. On the right is the transformer block and on the left is the controller, and the two connector sets are up front while in the back is the stack of track. Inset top left is the additional track set contents. If you choose, you may purchase more cars for your layout, such as the reefer or the ore car. In the lower right corner is a close-up of the additional clips you can install to keep track pieces together.

second wire set. On the other end are rail clips that work very well. You might want a Phillips screwdriver to turn the fastening screw initially and again when you have them in position to snug them up, but most of the time, tools just aren't necessary.

Once you have it all set up, perhaps a ten minute process the first time, rail up your train and you're all set for hours of fun. The throttle is a "suicide" type, a frightening term for a throttle that is "off" in the center of its swing, so turning it to the right from center causes the train to go forward and left from center makes it go in reverse. Because the 120VAC is limited to the black power transformer box, the wires from the controller, the controller, and the tracks, are isolated, children will only face the operating current. Still, parental supervision is always required for any electrical device used with children. I'd put the transformer block on a lawn chair or a block of wood to keep it out of the grass.

Expansion of Rail Service

The real railroads didn't stop with eleven miles of track out of Baltimore, which is what the B&O first constructed, and you won't want to stop there, either. Piko offers us an expansion track set that contains both straight and curved sections, and a pair of switches. The straight pieces feature seven of the 11-inch straights, two 12-3/4-inch straights, two 2-foot radius curves, and the two switches have a straight leg length of 12-3/4 inches. The two curved pieces join the switches to make the curved approach to each switch.

Of course, the most immediate choice would be to build an enlarged oval, using the two switches — one left and one right — to create a siding. With the two switches on one side, five straights on the other, and using all the supplied pieces, you could construct a siding extension with a straight run of about 58-1/2 inches. The other straight pieces — one for the siding and the two

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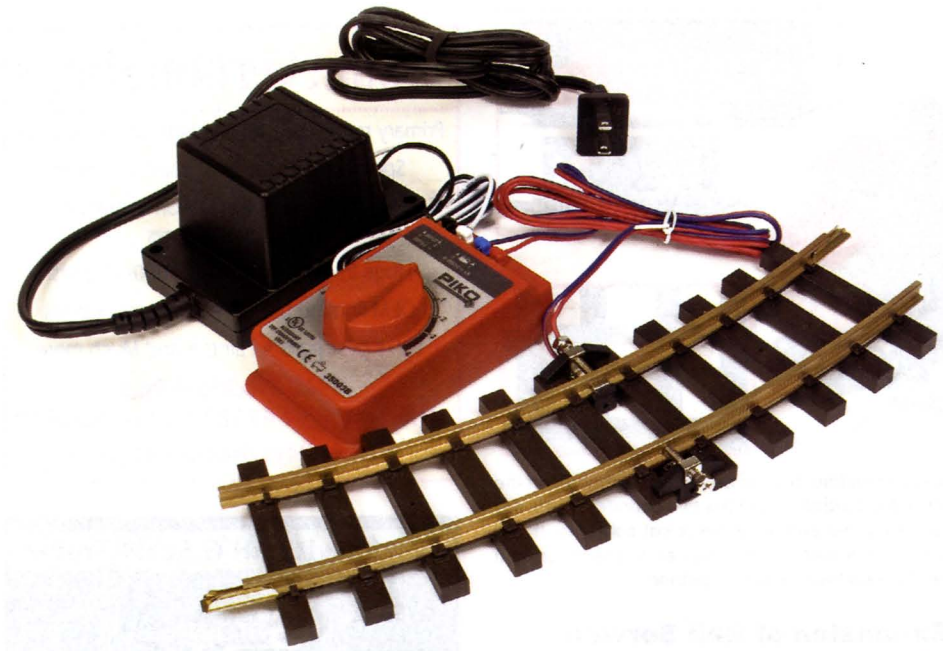
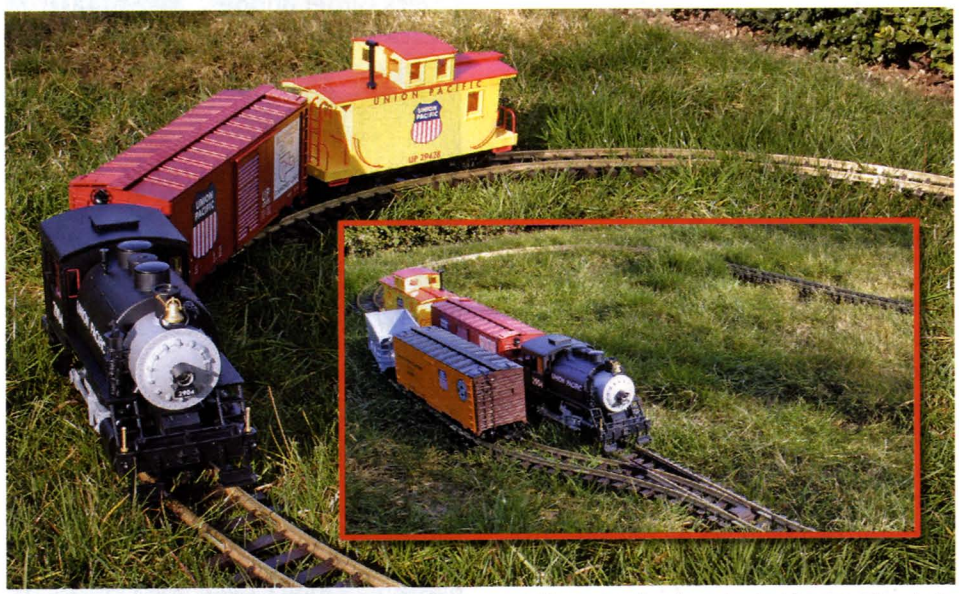


The black transformer box plugs into the wall and makes household current into safe track power. The blue and white wire set connects the transformer to the controller. The red and black pass the controlled voltage to the track, via the very clever track connectors shown in the foreground. You can connect to virtually any piece of track, working the wire to the inside or outside of the loop.



On a sunny day in February the grass hasn't been mowed for a couple of weeks, but I set up the circle first with the basic set of cars. Then I added the extension set of track, blowing my new little layout up to around four by nine feet. On the siding, I parked the two additional cars. Now I can cut off the engine, run it forward, back it down the siding to pick up the two cars, pull out, set the switch, and back up to make one, longer train. I started switching and the next thing I knew, a couple of hours had snuck by!

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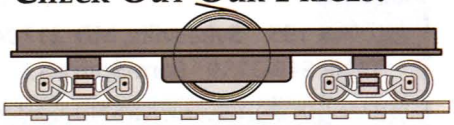

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long and three short being the same 58.5 inches, you can now build an oval four feet wide and almost nine feet long.

It's possible to use the two switches and other pieces to create any number of other layouts. You could add a service spur either going inside the loop or extending outward from it. Even more daunting would be to copy what real railroads do and build a point-to-point arrangement. With this set up, there is no loop at all!

When the basic set curves and the add-on set's straights, curves, and switches are all employed, you can create some very interesting layout concepts. More than that, you can explore switching and very interactive involvement with your garden railroad. As you concentrate on this activity, you may discover the other problems in your life fading away for a while.

More Cars Make Longer Trains

Piko also produces this model train line with additional cars. In our samples, we have a Pacific Fruit Express refrigerator car and a Union Pacific ore car. All of the Piko cars feature plastic wheels and truck-mounted hook-and-loop couplers. Painting and lettering are generally correct and quite colorful. The cars seem to be larger than 1:32 scale but smaller than 1:29. The cars are foreshortened for better performance on tight radius curves.

Could you replace the truck-mounted hook-and-loop couplers with body-mounted Kadees? Yes, that shouldn't be too much of a job. They'd probably look better with the smaller #1 couplers. Once you change the couplers to body mounts, however, they probably won't work on the tight curves of the set track. You could also replace the plastic wheels with metal wheels; choose sets of #1 (1:32) scale wheels. However, to enjoy your trains, you can use them just as they are.

More to Come

Piko has long been known for producing structures, both kit and built-up, and we're going to look those over in a future issue. Once you get your track settled into something you like, you can situate buildings and add little figures to give your garden railroad some more life. Piko's got us on a roll, so stay with us while we look over their line.

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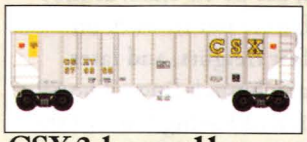

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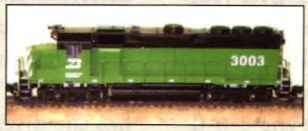

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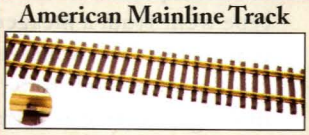

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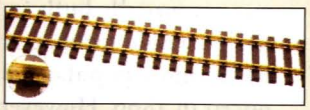

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Cover Story

REVIEW HO Steam

Brass Isn't Just For the Collector Anymore: Sunset's New SP Moguls

Beautiful model comes with sound and DC/DCC options

Review and Photos by David Otte

Southern Pacific M-6/M-9 2-6-0, MSRP: $649.95 DCC-Ready
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IF YOU'RE into collecting HO-scale brass, then you'll probably recognize the name Sunset Models. They have a 32-year track record of importing from the Orient some of the finest brass models in the industry. However, if you have never considered a brass model as an option for your operating layout, Sunset Models' latest offering may just change your mind.

Years ago, operators purchasing a new brass steam locomotive usually found themselves having to install some final detail parts, perhaps even painting and decaling the model, adding couplers and a coal load, and then doing some final tweaking to the drive train to get the engine running properly. Of course, this only involved analog Direct Current operation; factory-installed Digital Command Control and onboard sound was unheard of in a brass model. Fortunately, these potential drawbacks for purchasing a brass-fabricated model are no longer the case in today's world of brass imports, as is evident in the new Southern Pacific Moguls currently being out shopped by Sunset Models.

The Mogul

The first locomotive with a 2-6-0 wheel arrangement was the Pawnee built by Millholand for the Philadelphia & Reading Railroad in 1852. A small number of additional copies of this locomotive were later constructed by builders Smith & Perkins, Norris, and Baldwin, but these early 2-6-0s were erected with rigid lead wheels and were only successful at slow drag service offering no real advantages over the 0-6-0 design.

It wasn't until Levi Bissell's patented swiveling two-wheel lead truck design was introduced in 1858 that the 2-6-0 took off as a popular locomotive design. The Louisville & Nashville Railroad is credited as having rostered the first true 2-6-0s built in 1860 by Baldwin. The Central Railroad of New Jersey followed suit with a 2-6-0 of their own in 1861 and the Erie had a sizeable fleet of 2-6-0s by the mid-1860s. The 2-6-0 design was further enhanced by the efforts of William Hudson of the Rogers Works who perfected the three-point suspension, which allowed the lead trucks and drive axles to work in harmony when passing over less than ideal track conditions. This enlightened design aspect made the 2-6-0 a true competitor for the more widely accepted 4-4-0 wheel arrangement.

The true age of the 2-6-0 came with a Rogers-built locomotive for the New Jersey Railroad & Transportation Company in 1865 featuring the new Hudson equalizer suspension. Popularity of the design grew and soon spread to railroads throughout the country. Baldwin factory records indicate that production of this locomotive type went from a meager three engines a year in 1868 to twenty-six by 1875. The 2-6-0 proved itself to be very reliable in freight service as it tracked well and offered a 50 percent increase in tractive power over the 4-4-0. It has been estimated that as many as 11,000 Moguls were eventually built in the US, but the design would ultimately be superseded by the more popular 2-8-0 first introduced in 1866. However, new 2-6-0s would continue to be constructed up until the late 1920s.

It is interesting to note that the first endearing reference to the 2-6-0 as a "Mogul" was found in an advertisement by Baldwin in the Poor's Manual of Railroads of 1871 to 1872. Even before this use of the term though, the Central Railroad of New Jersey had named its 1866 Taunton-built 2-6-0 "Mogul" perhaps offering the entire class its now familiar moniker.

This brings us to the Southern Pacific who was a bit of a latecomer to this design, not purchasing the bulk of their 355 Moguls until the turn of the twentieth century. Spread out over 20 different classes, the SP M-class, as they were designated, were put to work on level mainline, fast freights, and later on the road's many branch lines. The SP has the distinction of having some of the country's largest 2-6-0s, culminating in the heaviest on record: the M-21 class, built at the railroad's Houston Shops in 1928 and 1929 — the last Moguls to be built in the US.

Southern Pacific 2-6-0s Honored in Brass

As far as the new Sunset Moguls are concerned, we're specifically interested in the SP's M-6 and M-9 classes. The M-6s numbered 72 total with 69 built between the years of 1901 and 1903 by Baldwin and the remaining three, assembled at the SP's Sacramento Shops, not joining the roster until 1917 and 1918. The Baldwin-built M-6s were delivered as Vauclain compounds, having one low and one high pressure cylinder per side, but were rebuilt to conventional two-cylinder single expansion between 1907 and 1915. On the other hand, the M-9 class totaled 61 locomotives erected between 1908 and 1918 by the combined efforts of Baldwin, the American Locomotive Company's Brook Works, and at the Sacramento Shops. A number of representatives of both classes survived well into 1958 before being retired. Today, several examples of the M-6 class still exist as static exhibits with number 1744 currently being rebuilt to run again on the Rio Grande Scenic Railroad, a tourist line out of Alamosa, Colorado.

Both classes were very similar in design, utilizing the same inside Stephenson valve gear, 63-inch diameter drivers, and 21-inch x 28-inch cylinders. They also shared weight on drivers of about 150,000 pounds, were oil burners, and had the same driver spacing. The M-9 was a slightly heavier engine, though, and had a boiler pressure rating of 210 pounds as compared to the M-6's 200 pounds. While the tractive effort for the M-9 was 34,990 pounds, the M-6 wasn't far behind at a respectable 33,230 pounds. The physical dimensions of the two engines

Minutes before departing the depot, the C-9 class Mogul is positioned to take on water. The Sunset Models' locomotive is equipped with all the bells and whistles making it more than just a collector's shelf piece. Ready-to-run in either a DCC-ready or with factory-installed decoder and Quantum Sound system, these new 2-6-0s are perfect for the operator looking for authentic Southern Pacific equipment. An American Model Builders' Laser-cut water tank replenishes the 1809's tender while a couple of Woodland Scenics' figures serve as her crew.

The 355-locomotive-strong M (Mogul) class on the SP was made up of 20 different subclasses. The focus for Sunset Model's latest release is the M-6 and M-9. Number 1729 was one of 69 M-6s (1725–1769, 1780–1803) erected by Baldwin. Sunset's accurate rendering of this locomotive is evidence that they did their homework on this often complex class of steamers. She's pictured here in the pre-1946 lettering scheme.

are very close as well with the difference in height to centerline of boiler and overall engine length not amounting to more than a 4-inch difference, with the M-6 having a slightly longer frame and the M-9 being just a hair taller.

However, there are some visual distinctions that aid the railfan in telling these two classes apart. First of all, the members of the M-9 class have a very noticeable curved crosshead guide support bracket. The M-9s also have a longer smokebox as well as a longer cab that rides further up on the boiler. Finally, the majority of the M-6 class appear to have had taller sand domes then those used on the M-9.

If you're already familiar with brass models, then the Sunset Mogul certainly won't disappoint; it features details galore with separately applied handrails, see-through pilot, coupler lift bar, wood grain finish on footboards, air hoses, illuminated headlight, angled numberboards, class lights, and all the steam, sand, water, electrical, and air lines visible on the prototype. Especially take note of the Alco Brooks Works builder's plate on number 1809, which under magnification, is fully readable. She also exhibits a brightly painted aluminum smoke box front, which came into practice on the SP in 1946. Also note the curved crosshead guide support that is a visual indicator that this Mogul is a member of the M-9 class.

The Sunset replicas I sampled of these two Mogul classes followed all of these attributes closely. I compared both engines to their respective pages in an original SP diagram book and was quite pleased with how closely the manufacturer followed the proper dimensions. Those visual indicators discussed above were also quite apparent on these models, which are constructed entirely from brass with the drivers and running gear made of nickel silver.

These properly scaled engines are paired with all-brass-fabricated tenders, too, riding on insulated nickel silver wheels. The SP used a variety of tender types and sizes with the M-6 and M-9 classes including rectangular, Vanderbilt-style, and semi-cylindrical whaleback oil tenders. In the case of the Sunset models, both are equipped with Vanderbilt-style class 100-C-4 tenders, which had a lightweight of 67,000 pounds and a water capacity of 10,060 gallons. I believe these were about the largest tenders used behind the M-6 and M-9 classes. They had tanks that stretched 31-feet 4-inches long and oil bunkers that measured 6-feet high by 10-feet 6-inches long. The HO-scale tenders follow suit practically matching the length of the engines and only increasing the sheer massiveness of these powerful Moguls.

One of the greatest benefits of brass models in the past was the wonderful level of detail they always displayed and I'm happy to say these Sunset models won't let the brass connoisseur down in the least. The little details found on the major components are just outstanding. From the fineness of the rivets on the cab roof and sides, to the jacket clamps on the top of the boiler, and from the tread plate pattern on the running boards, to the wood grain on the pilot footboards and

The Vanderbilt-style tender of these Moguls is equally well detailed with separately applied ladders, add-on handrail, brake system, operating backup light, air hoses, and coupler lift bar. Also note the Kadee knuckle coupler, the three water hatches, the wood grain finish on the deck planks, the oil fill hatch and the dipstick for measuring the level of fuel oil in the bunker. The SP 100-C-4 tender was probably the largest tender ever used with the M-6 and M-9 classes, with a lightweight rating of 67,000 pounds and loaded weight of 174,300 pounds. This 1/87-scale version weighs only 5.3 ounces, so it's not much of a burden for the engine, but still tracks very well.

tender tank deck planks, these Moguls lack nothing. All the sanding, air, steam, and water piping is hand applied as are the many appliances including the air pump with air reservoir tanks and cooling lines, lifting-style injectors, air-operated power reverse, smokebox-door-centered headlight, steam turbine with electrical conduit leading down into the boiler jacket, classification lights, working cab roof vent, cab sun shades, wire railing and hand holds, uncoupling bar and air hose on the pilot, angled numberboards, both bell and whistle with cords running into the cab, window glazing, and those unique, rectangular-shaped SP blow-down mufflers.

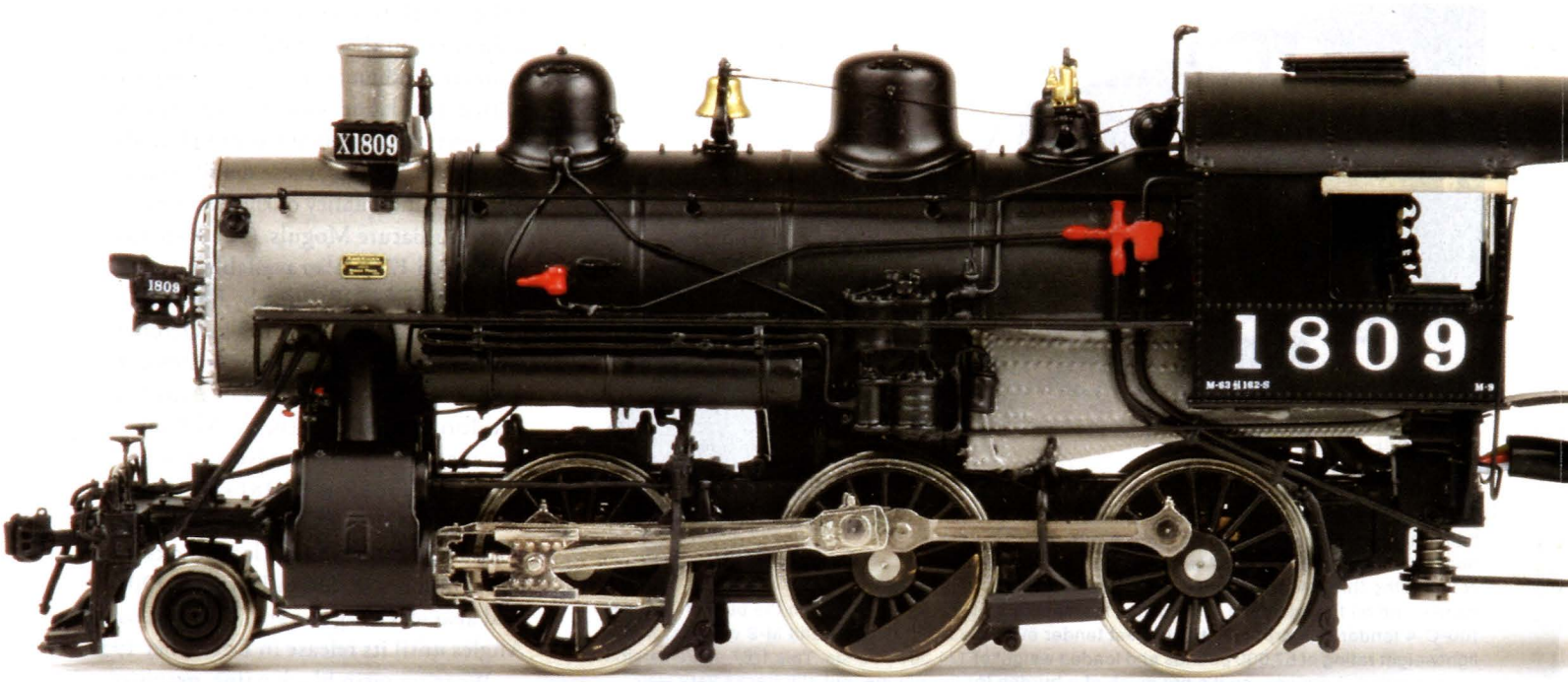
The backhead is fully detailed, too, ready for the modeler to install their own engineer and fireman figures. Back on the tender, you'll find opening water hatches, a backup headlight, add-on valve wheel, tool boxes on the tank sides, a dipstick on the oil tank, full brake gear beneath, and metal railings throughout with access ladders leading up the rear to the separately applied running boards.

Only enhancing these details is the accuracy and quality of the decoration of these miniature Moguls. Our M-6 was numbered 1729 (also available numbered for 1726 and 1727) built by Baldwin under serial number 19589 in October 1901 and retired in September 1958. It served most its life in the Los Angeles, California area. In turn, the M-9 carries roadnumber 1809 (also available numbered for SP 1813, 1814, 1815, and subsidiary Texas & New Orleans 552 and 556) as constructed by Alco-Brooks under serial number 45024 in February 1908 and also servicing the area around Los Angles until its release in December 1956.

Wearing satin black paint, graphite smoke and fire boxes, and trimmed with SP's traditional red cab doors, injector apparatus, and check valves, the Sunset models look quite dashing. The cab interior is finished in standard green and the sunshades highlighted in a tan canvas color. The white lettering and numbers are sharp and opaque with the small cab and tender data clearly readable. Overall, a first-rate paint job!

Note that the M-6 model is lettered with the pre-1946 "SOUTHERN

Sunset's detailed six-coupled driver set is evident in this photo. Rods, valves, alligator type crossheads, and guides are all made of nickel silver. Both of these classes of 2-6-0 used inside Stephenson valve gear, which was typical of most Moguls built in the US. This arrangement, along with the generous spacing that existed between the drivers, allowed for easy maintenance on these locomotives, which is one reason why they lasted so long on the SP. Also visible are the scale 63-inch diameter see-through drivers, which were good size for a Mogul-type engine (the SP's M-21 class, the heaviest Moguls ever built, had 64-inch drivers). Finally, I draw your attention to the rectangular shaped device and pipe hanging between the second and third drivers. This was the blow-down muffler, which was added sometime during the war years to most SP steam locomotives in an effort to safely direct the hot water from the blow down toward the roadbed and away from any bystanders.



Sunset Model's new SP Moguls prove that brass models aren't just for collectors anymore. Museum quality hand-fabricated details combined with QS Industries technology make these HO-scale DCC/Sound equipped steam locomotives the perfect choice for the discriminating operator, who will also appreciate the accuracy of these M-6 and M-9 class 2-6-0 replicas. Pictured here is M-9 number 1809 wearing the post-1946 lettering on its tender.

PACIFIC LINES" on the tender. This fact combined with the presence of the blow-down mufflers beneath the cab, which were installed on most SP locomotives between 1942 and 1945, suggests the appearance of number 1729 in service during or shortly right after the Second World War. The M-9, however, wears the large "SOUTHERN PACIFIC" on its tender and is correctly matched with aluminum painted smokebox front of a post-1946 2-6-0. Last, but not least, both models include the appropriate readable, photo-etched Baldwin or Alco builders' plates on the smokebox sides as well.

Mogul Mechanics, Motion, and Music

Powering these magnificent looking Moguls is a single Japanese-made Mashima 5-pole, 12 volt DC can motor. It turns the middle driver axle by way of a silicone rubber tubing connection between the motor shaft and the gear tower: typical of many brass locomotive offerings. All drive wheels are flanged with the first and third axles being sprung offering the Mogul the ability to track through minimum 18-inch radius curves. The wheels of the engine and tender were checked with a NMRA Standards Gauge and found to be spaced properly for HO gauge and the metal Kadee coupler on the rear of the tender was mounted at the correct height. Unfortunately, the pilot is equipped only with a dummy knuckle coupler and it doesn't appear that the pilot could be easily modified to accept a Kadee. Both locomotives did, however, check out okay on rail sizes down to code 70.

Unlike those older, poor-running brass engines, which used only one side of the drivers and one side of the tender wheels to act as electrical pickups with the circuit completed through the drawbar, the Sunset models use both sides of the drivers and the tender wheels and a wiring harness to reliably deliver power. Sprung contact pins collect electricity from the first and third pair of drivers while copper wipers are used on all tender truck wheels. This worked out very well during my testing with neither Mogul ever stalling on our test track even when traveling through turnouts.

Overall, our two sample 2-6-0s were very smooth runners right out of the box with minimal gear noise audible. Low speed operation was a very respectable two scale miles per hour with a high-end speed of about 40 miles per hour with an analog 12 volt transformer and 52 scale miles per hour under DCC — right on the money for a typical Mogul. Drawbar pull was also noteworthy for a 2-6-0 considering the engines only weighed 11 ounces and are not equipped with traction tires. On level track with 36-inch radius curves, each pulled on average 27 freight cars and, on a 2 percent grade, hauled 13 cars before their drivers started slipping.

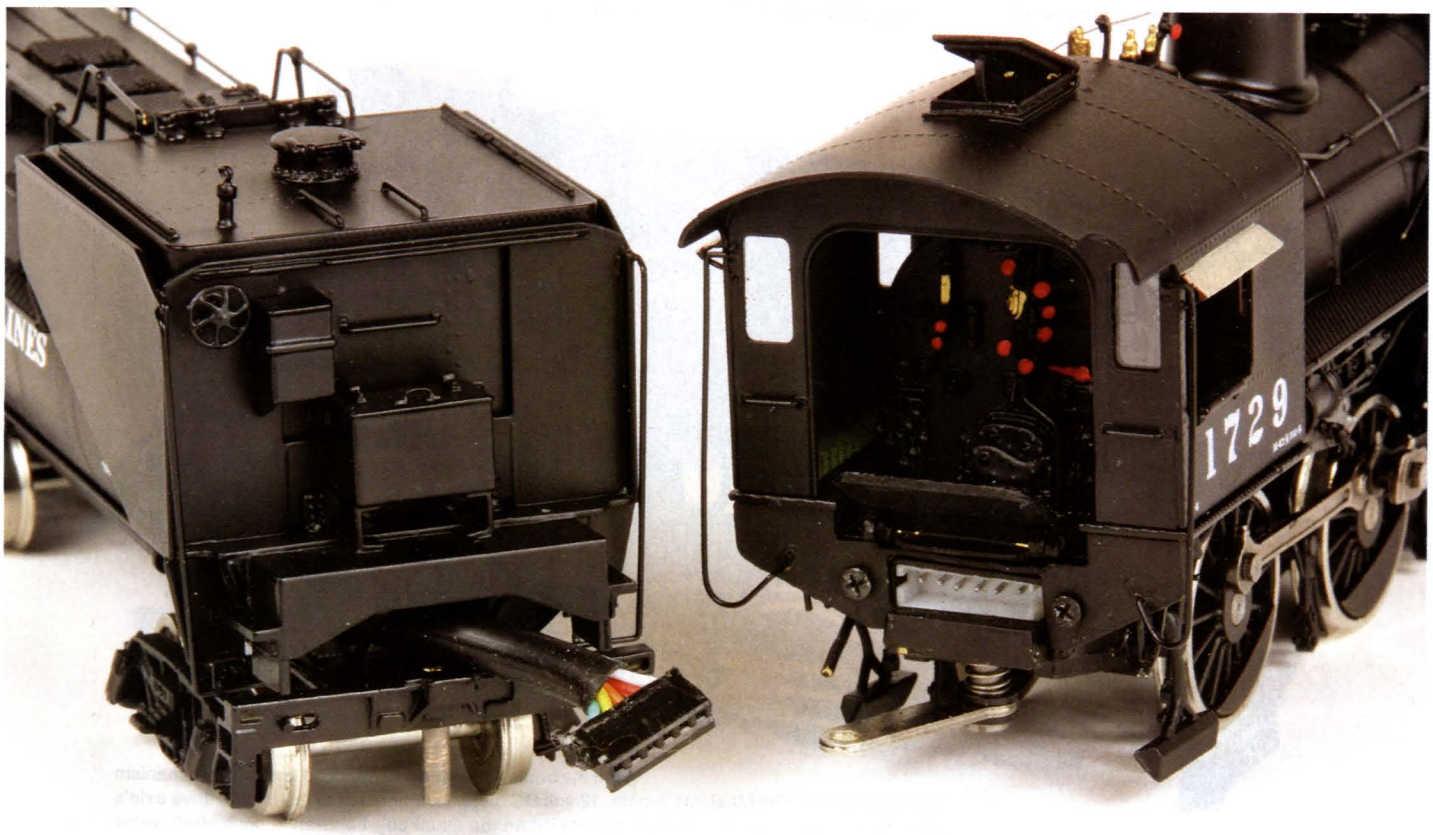
The lighting system on these Moguls consists of a yellow tinted headlight on the engine and a warm white backup light on the tender. Both are directionally controlled with the engine's headlight remaining dim at start up and brightening when the locomotive begins to move forward. No interior cab light is included nor are the angled numberboards illuminated. I really didn't miss these later two features, but I would like to have seen the use of jewels to represent the lenses in the class lights.

While you can purchase these models as DCC-ready only, it's the inclusion of the DCC decoder and QSI's Quantum sound system that brings these brass Moguls into the twenty-first century. QSI's electronics package has been utilized in many-mass produced locomotives and reviewed many times in *Model Railroad News*, so it's suffice to say that this system has a proven performance record. Just to refresh your memory, the Quantum system may be operated on either DC or DCC layouts, but when operating in analog mode the Quantum Engineer is recommended to take full advantage of all the features the sound system has to offer. It easily

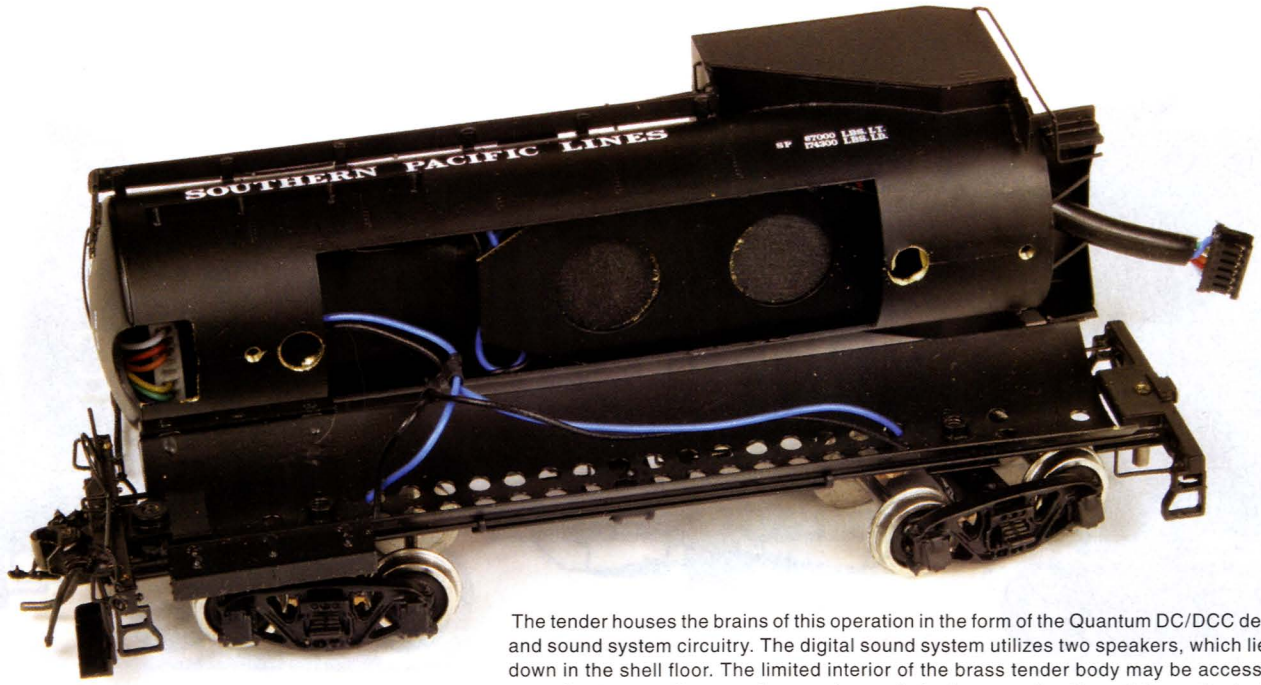
hooks up between your transformer and the track.

In DCC mode, Quantum supports the NMRA 0–12 function key standard that allows the operator to access a number of authentic locomotive sounds. For the Moguls this includes bell, whistle, steam chuff, coupler crash, squealing brakes and flanges, and a whole host of incidental sounds such as the dynamo at startup, cylinder cocks, air pump, blower hiss, water injector, air let-off, and blower pop off. All of these sounds can be adjusted to your liking following the QSI Quantum Sound System Manual for Steam Engines, which is not included with the Sunset models, but is available for download on QSI's web site at www.qsindustries.com.

I found our samples to be properly responsive to the controls of my Digitrax Zephyr system and rich in sound quality with the factory default DCC settings. Despite the

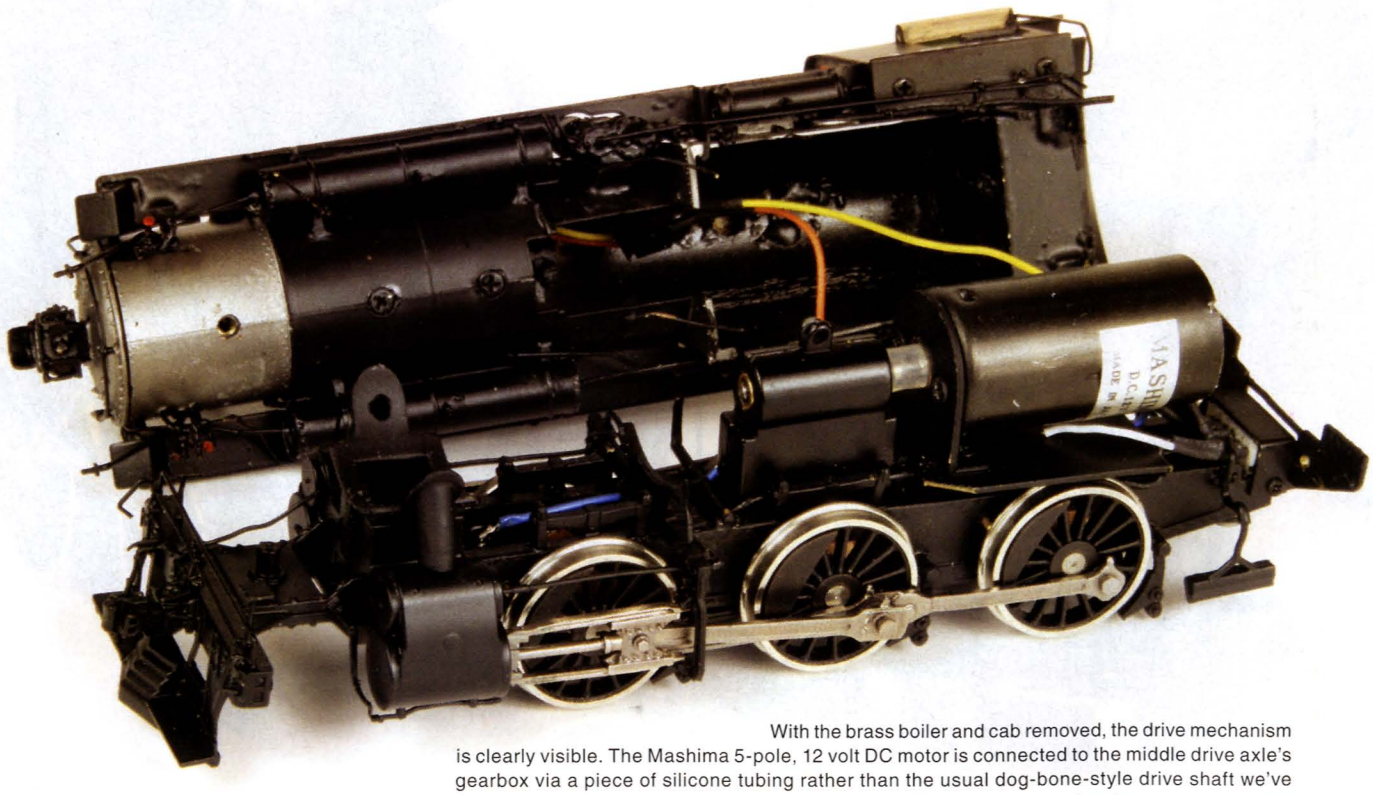


Connecting the tender to the locomotive is straightforward. A wiring harness, with 6-pin micro plug coming from the tender, pushes into the receptacle beneath the hinged tender apron on the engine with the pin under the tender placed in the single hole on the metal drawbar, which is fastened to a sprung pivot point on the end of the frame beneath the cab. Note the interior details of the backhead with the various valve wheels highlighted in red paint and the sight glasses in brass. Also, the cab roof vent is shown in the open position.



The tender houses the brains of this operation in the form of the Quantum DC/DCC decoder and sound system circuitry. The digital sound system utilizes two speakers, which lie face down in the shell floor. The limited interior of the brass tender body may be accessed by removing two small screws from underneath the frame and pulling off the entire tank.

narrow tender, the manufacturer has squeezed in two speakers, which provided ample volume offering four strong steam chuffs per driver revolution making our two Moguls just sing as they rolled down the tracks and a very pleasing whistle tone that was pretty much what I would expect to hear from a 2-6-0. In fact, if you press the F2 button on your DCC controller once quickly, you'll get a short toot so it is possible to perform the standard signaling for forward, stop, and reverse. If you keep the button depressed, then a long whistle signal can be heard. Generally, all the sounds were convincing and the whole QSI DCC package is well worth the extra $50. Brass never sounded so good!



With the brass boiler and cab removed, the drive mechanism is clearly visible. The Mashima 5-pole, 12 volt DC motor is connected to the middle drive axle's gearbox via a piece of silicone tubing rather than the usual dog-bone-style drive shaft we've seen on other mass-produced model locomotives. This arrangement has been used for years on brass models and in the case of the Mogul is about the only way to provide a flexible drive shaft with such a short length. This helps keep the long can motor hidden inside the fire box while also allowing for an accurate driver spacing on these smaller engines.

Side by side, the differences between these generally similar looking locomotives become more apparent. The cab on M-9 1809 is longer than that of M-6 1729 and is located further up on the boiler. The sand dome on the Baldwin built M-6 is taller than its own steam dome as well as the sand dome on the M-9. The M-9's smoke box is approximately 9 inches longer then that of the M-6's. Finally, the M-9 has a curved crosshead guide bracket support while the M-6's is straight.

Works of Art You Can Play With

With these new SP Mogul releases, Sunset Models is certainly changing the whole outlook on brass for the HO-scale operator. Sure, they're darn near works of art that should be sitting in a collector's display case, but coupled with a smooth drive right out of the box and the command control and authentic sounds today's modelers demand, they belong on a layout for the operator to enjoy. Keep in mind that most hand-fabricated brass models are produced in much smaller quantities than the diecast or plastic models you usually see at your local hobby shop. Therefore, if these new Moguls catch your fancy, don't delay in contacting Sunset Models before they're all gone. For a complete list of projects this manufacturer is currently undertaking, check them out on the web at www.3rdrail.com.

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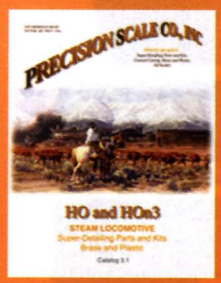

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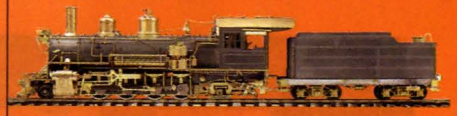

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REVIEW N

Make Way for the *Broadway*

Review by Steven Goehring
Photos by John Sipple

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MAKE WAY, Northeastern N-scale modelers! A great new passenger train has hit the market. Kato has released the *Broadway Limited* passenger cars to accompany its earlier Pennsylvania Railroad GG1 locomotive. The cars are available as a 10-car base set, much like Kato's previous *California Zephyr* and *Morning Daylight* releases. Kato has also made a 4-car add-on set available and has put its Santa Fe sleeper car back into production to give us a separately available run-through sleeper. Suggested motive power for this train includes the Kato GG1, retailing for $139.00, or the Kato E8 diesel, retailing for $95.00 each.

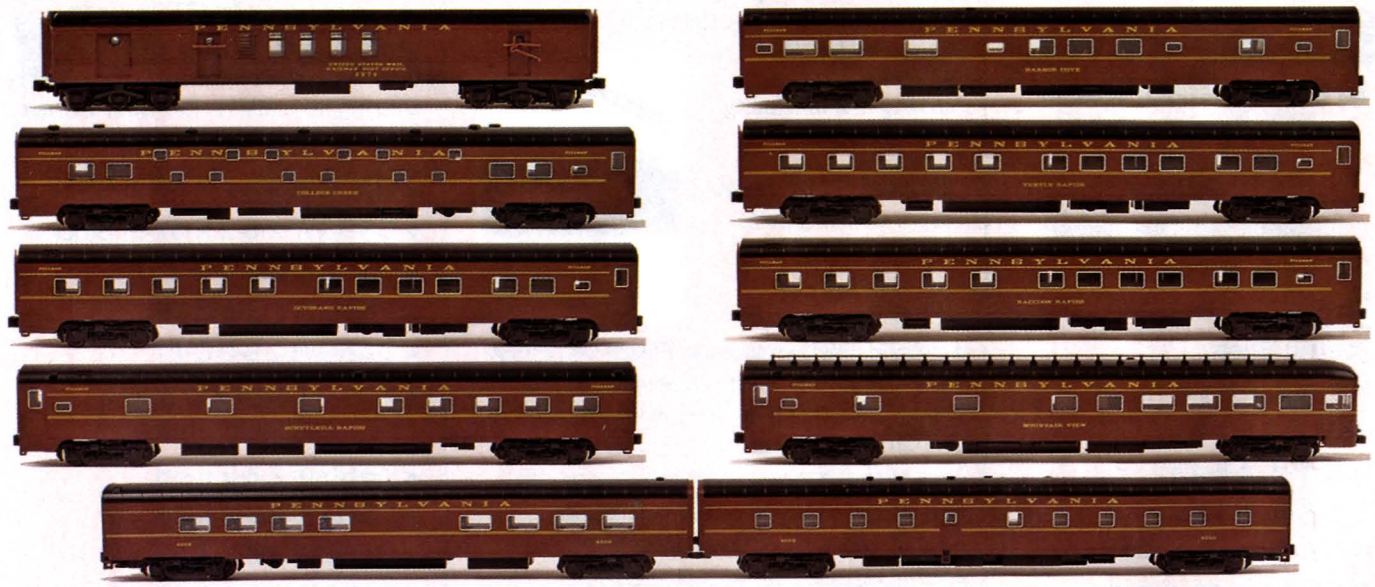
The *Broadway Limited*: Pride of the Pennsy

On March 15, 1949, the Pennsylvania Railroad re-equipped its top passenger train, the *Broadway Limited*, with two new trains and the necessary diesel locomotives to pull them. The total cost of the new equipment was $4.6 million in 1949 dollars, or nearly $35 million dollars today! Some would think that the name "Broadway Limited" refers to New York City's theatres, but it actually comes from the Pennsylvania's broad 4-track mainline along most of the train's route, and the four tracks on the train's logo reflect that.

Throughout its history with the Pennsylvania Railroad, the *Broadway* was a very impressive train in its luxury, technology, and appeal. One advanced feature introduced in 1947 was the onboard radio-telephone service that allowed passengers to make long-distance calls en route, hence why some of the *Broadway's* cars had the distinctive Trainphone antenna on their rooftops. Dining service was top-notch and only private room accommodations were offered, doing away with bunk compartments and coach seats to give patrons the privacy of various bedrooms or the cozy, one-person "Roomette." The variety of accommodations available on the train is evident even in just the classification names of its sleeper cars, as such classes as "4-4-2" or "12-4 duplex" describe the number of rooms of specific types found within the type of car.

Probably the most distinctive car on the train was the rear end sleeper-bar-lounge-observation cars, the *Tower View* or *Mountain View*, which carried the *Broadway Limited's* distinctive keystone symbol on the drumhead tail sign. This car has had a long history, from prestige to preservation, and it is still around today at the Altoona Railroaders' Memorial Museum.

Another distinctive car in the *Broadway* consist is the BM70M-type baggage-mail car. The BM70M is the only "Standard Weight" (PRR jargon for the old heavyweight car design) car in the train. According to the Pennsy's 1953 equipment register, there were 46 such cars on the roster, and there was almost always a BM70M on the *Broadway Limited*. Furthermore, the BM70 rebuilds like the BM70M were the first air-conditioned Railway Post Office cars on the Pennsy. Another regular feature of the *Broadway* was the Pennsylvania Railroad's only named baggage car, the *Robert E. Hannegan*. Car number 5239 was rebuilt from a BM70 in 1946, along with many other BM70s, but instead of simply carrying a number like every other PRR RPO, it was renamed after the then-Postmaster General of the United States. If you wanted to model this distinctive car, simply decal your Kato set's BM70M car and you're done. If you ever have the *Broadway Limited* westbound and eastbound trains meet, you'd better have the named baggage



Here's what you get with the base 10-car *Broadway Limited* set: one BM70M baggage-mail car, one 12-4 duplex sleeper car, four 10-6 "Rapids" series sleeper cars (pictured in two groups of two, one above diner — left column and one above the end car — right column), one diner-kitchen/dormitory drawbar-connected pair — bottom, one 5 double bedroom bar-lounge car, and one 2 double bedroom-bar-lounge-observation car. An add-on set is also available.

The crown jewel of the 1949 *Broadway Limited* was the "View" series 2 double bedroom-bar-lounge-observation car. Kato has nailed it right on with their representation of the "Mountain View" car. Want proof? Grab your model and head to the Railroaders' Memorial Museum in Altoona, where the real thing is kept.

car on one of them! (That might be a good reason for Kato to consider offering the BM70M car individually.) Also, if you're modeling modern times, you can display a BM70M right alongside your Mountain View in the Railroaders' Memorial Museum in Altoona, since the *Robert E. Hannegan* is spending its retirement there.

Finally, the D85C-D85D twin-unit diner and kitchen-dormitory car is another Pennsy-specific car included in the set. The car no. 4609-4608 in the set was built by American Car & Foundry in a smoothside car body design to match the rest of the cars. Others were built by the Pennsy's Altoona car shops or the Budd Company. These two-unit diner cars were assigned to the *Broadway Limited* in 1949. The Budd cars had fluted (corrugated) sides, much like the Santa Fe sleeper, and despite this mismatch, they often turned up on the *Broadway Limited*. I for one am glad Kato assigned an ACF-built car to their *Broadway*; I like the consistent look.

While not a PRR car, the Santa Fe run-through sleeper, *Regal Spa*, is a nice addition to the *Broadway* consist.

The PRR and Santa Fe Railway announced their New York-Los Angeles run-through sleeper service on March 19, 1946, and inaugurated the service on March 31. The transcontinental sleeper car would have been traded off to the Santa Fe at Chicago to ride the *Chief* or *Super Chief* to Los Angeles. These cars ran alternating between the *Broadway Limited* and the New York Central's *20th Century Limited*, so the run-through sleepers would have showed up on the *Broadway* every other day. Regal-series sleepers took over this service as they were introduced through the early 50s, with *Regal Spa* entering service in 1951. Interestingly, the real *Regal Spa* still exists as well. It remained in its Santa Fe paintwork well into the '90s, although the window closest to the vestibule on the room side was covered over. It now runs as a part of the BNSF business fleet, renamed *Rollins Pass* and adorned with BNSF swoosh logos.

How to Run Your *Broadway Limited*

Remove cars from box, place on track with handy-dandy re-railer ramp, attach classy passenger loco, and... OK, I'll stop now, you know all that already. But I would like to share some information on the consist, appropriate modeling era, and nuances of running an accurate *Broadway Limited* train using Kato's cars.

For starters, each of these cars were introduced on the *Broadway*. From front to back of the train: BM70M: similar models 1930 to present, exact model 1946 to end; (optional) ATSF 4-4-2 sleeper Regal Spa: 1951 to present; 21 roomette *Massillon Inn*: 1949 to 1963; 21 roomette *Ravenna Inn*: 1949 to 1963; 12-4 duplex sleeper *College Creek*: 1949 to end; 4-4-2 sleeper *Imperial Trees*: 1949 to end; 10-6 sleeper *Octoraro Rapids*: 1949 to end; Bedroom-bar-lounge *Harbor Cove*: 1938 to 1943 or 1943 to

Wait, that's not a Pennsy car. You're right, it's a Santa Fe sleeper, built for the *Super Chief* in the early 1950s. The Pennsy ran cars like this in run-through service, trading the car with the Santa Fe at Chicago.

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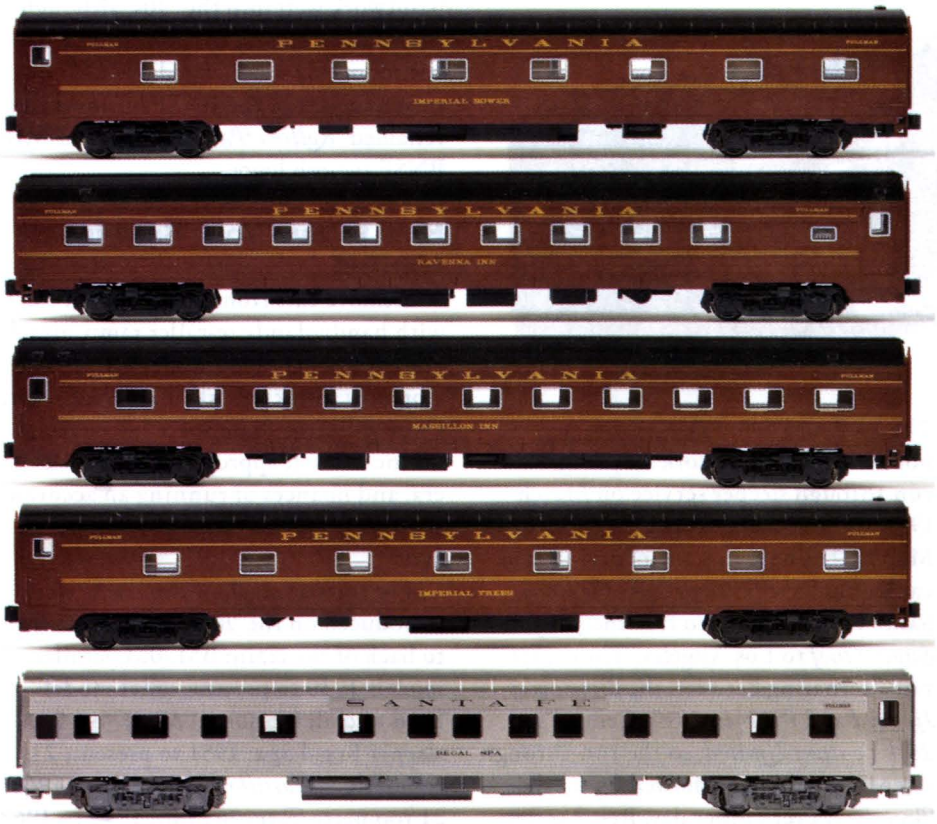

Here you have the 4-car add-on set, a must-have to accurately model the *Broadway Limited*. From top to bottom: Budd-built "Inn" series 21 Roomette sleepers, two 4-4-2 "Imperial" series sleeper, and another "Inn" series car. The Santa Fe "Regal Spa" 4-4-2 sleeper is shown on the bottom and is sold separately.

end with window modification; diner no. 4609: 1949 to end, paired with kitchen-dormitory no. 4608: 1949 to end; 4-4-2 sleeper *Imperial Bower*: 1949 to end; 10-6 sleeper *Schuylkill Rapids*: 1949 to end; 10-6 sleeper *Raccoon Rapids*: 1949 to end; 10-6 sleeper *Turtle Rapids*: 1949 to 1956; sleeper-bar-lounge-observation *Mountain View*: 1949 to present.

Secondly, there is generally a correct end of each car to have facing forward. The baggage-mail car usually had its two baggage doors facing forward, and mail hook end facing back. The rest of the cars usually had the vestibule end leading, probably for consistency when matching the end car with its forward vestibule only. On Kato's models the leading end's between-car door is usually open.

As for what order to run the cars, Kato provides a realistic car arrangement on the back of the box for the 10-car base set and the 4-car add-on. But since passenger demands varied, you can rearrange the train for added realism on different "days" of operation. Always include the baggage-mail BM70M car, with the mail hook facing to the rear. Add the Santa Fe run-through sleeper alternating every other day, then a block of PRR sleeper cars. Generally, the first two cars were the 21 Roomette sleepers, followed by two to four other sleeper cars of various floor plans. Then add the *Harbor Cove* lounge car, the two-unit diner with the diner car forward, and another block of sleepers — 4-4-2 and 10-6 types were common behind the diner. Finally, add on the *Mountain View* observation car, and you have a realistic post-1949 *Broadway Limited*.

Kato's Take on the *Broadway*

My first impression of the Kato *Broadway Limited* set was that it's very long compared to other passenger trains I've run. The *Broadway's* 15 cars is nothing to sneeze at, ranking in second place for the longest name train Kato has ever done (behind the full *Morning Daylight*, but beating out the *California Zephyr* and *Super Chief*.) When I first got the set, I immediately noticed just how sharp the train looks. The *Broadway* was the Pennsy's finest train, so they made sure that its equipment was clean, properly matched, and in good shape. The cars' glossy finish really shows, too, matching the similar shine on the GG1. The Pennsylvania smoothside cars and their Tuscan Red sides seem to out-shine the older model design Santa Fe run-through sleeper that Kato offers as a separate addition. This is a welcome improvement in my opinion; it's nice to get the paint shine level right just as it's important to have the colors accurate. I hope it will be a standard feature for new models to have the correct paint finish, since we're seeing factory-weathered models from many manufacturers now.

I took the time to check each car against multiple photographs and the appropriate measured diagram. My conclusion is that Kato did a marvelous job of recreating the train with great accuracy. For the rivet counters out there, if you think Kato made a mistake, check on these explanations first. For one, Kato modeled the 10-6 sleepers as Pullman floor plan 4140s, which had a different window grouping on the passageway side compared to Plan 4129s. The two plans were equally common, but Kato got the names right for all 4 Plan 4140s. Secondly, they chose to include a 2-double bedroom secretary lounge car, a feature removed from the train in 1943 when said car was remodeled to have three extra bedrooms in place of some of the service accommodations. Externally, this change added two large windows to the bedroom side (vestibule on the right.) So don't let anyone tell you Kato produced an inaccurate car for their *Broadway Limited*. They're all accurate per Pennsylvania Railroad prototypes, just a few are easily confused with better-known variants or went through modifications that limited their modeling era.

Disassembly

Disassembling the *Broadway Limited* cars is actually quite easy, which will be a relief for those who wish to install Kato's no. 11-209 light kit. The shells on the new PRR cars are held on by tabs on the underframe that hold onto notches in the window glazing. To separate these, simply insert four toothpicks between the black underframe and the clear window glazing on the inside. You should place each toothpick right next to the innermost axle of each truck, one on each corner. The shell should slide off easily. Remember which way the body faces on the underframe, though! If you forget, reinstall the shell with the vestibule end on the same side as the product number

Finally, an accurate Pennsylvania Railroad baggage-mail car! Kato's rendition of the BM70M Railroad Post Office car is right on the money with proper dimensions, window arrangement, and other such details, much like the rest of the *Broadway Limited* set. If your railroad has nice wide curves, you may want to form some wire steps to go under the doors; as it is, Kato left those off to allow the trucks to swing through even 9-3/4-inch radius curves.

stamped on the top of the underframe.

The car's interior parts include the plastic interior piece, two window glazing strips, the electrical contact strips for the lighting kit, a metal weight, the body shell sides, and the roof. The trucks are much like Kato's past passenger car trucks, featuring free-rolling metal wheels, electrical pickups, crisply molded sideframes, and Kato's own knuckle coupler. The *Broadway's* trucks differ in that they are held on by a clip molded into the underframe rather than a screw or friction-fit pin. While this mounting method makes it difficult to change out the trucks, it doesn't seem to affect performance adversely, as the trucks rotate as freely and smoothly as they roll. I chose not to risk taking the trucks off of any of the PRR cars, as it looked like a difficult task compared to the simpler screw-mounted trucks of the Santa Fe sleeper car. The new PRR cars are overall well built, solid, and durable, and if you ever need to take them apart, it's easy and safe to do so.

Making the Grade

I wanted to test Kato's claim that their GG1 locomotive could pull the entire *Broadway Limited* train up a four percent grade. To put this number in perspective, that means a grade where for every foot of horizontal distance traveled, the terrain rises 4 feet. I got a plank of wood, some straight track, a measuring tape and a calculator and figured out a 9-foot long four percent incline. My dad provided the wood for the temporary ramp, and both of us were surprised at how steep a four percent grade looks. So in my case, I had just over 100 inches of run and proportionally over 4 inches of rise. I turned up the power on the GG1 and she simply walked off with the train, with everything from the observation car to the mighty GG1 all sloping backwards on the climb over Ping-Pong Table Pass. Kato was right on in their claim that the GG1 will haul the entire train up a four percent grade. In fact, I dare say it would handle more cars if you wanted it to.

N Passenger Cars the Right Way

I highly recommend Kato's *Broadway Limited* set to any fellow N-scale modelers with an interest in the Pennsylvania Railroad. The set is accurate, beautifully made, and runs like a dream. If you can't afford the $250 base set, you should look for the 4-car add-on, as you can use those cars on trains other than the *Broadway*. The real joy of the set is the Pennsylvania Railroad-specific cars featured in the base set, though, so get to your nearest hobby retailer right away for one train you won't want to miss!

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By-The-Numbers
SD60I - CR
Athearn Inc.
HO 1:87 • Type: Diesel
Traction Tires? No

Pull Power (Ozs @ Full Slip)

Pull	÷ Loco Wt	= Efficiency
4.8	22.9	21%
Volts	Amps	
16	0.38	

Analog DC

Start Volts = 6.2

Volts	Amps	Scale MPH
6	0.22	20
8	0.25	40
12	0.26	69
16	0.29	112

DCC

Stall Amps (if applicable)

Speed	Step (of 128)	Scale MPH
Min	1	0.2
Mid	63	56
Top	126	109

By-The-Numbers
SD60M - BN
Athearn Inc.
HO 1:87 • Type: Diesel
Traction Tires? No

Pull Power (Ozs @ Full Slip)

Pull	÷ Loco Wt	= Efficiency
5.3	20.8	25.5%
Volts	Amps	
16	0.43	

Analog DC

Start Volts = 9.9

Volts	Amps	Scale MPH
10	0.19	7
13	0.24	43
16	0.28	81

DCC

Stall Amps (if applicable)

Speed	Step (of 128)	Scale MPH
Min	1	8
Mid	63	87
Top	126	138

IN JANUARY 1989, the Union Pacific Railroad took delivery of a new locomotive model that heralded the introduction of the North American cab to US railroading. This locomotive, the Electro Motive SD60M, would forever change the face of EMD road locomotives that had first appeared on the GP35 of 1964.

The North American Cab Arrives

By the mid 1980s, GM's Electro-Motive Division (EMD) product line was based on the 60 series of locomotives. These included the GP59, the cataloged but never built SD59, the GP60, and the SD60. All utilized a variant of the new 710 prime mover, with 3,000 horsepower from 12 cylinders in the GP59, and 3,800 horsepower from 16 cylinders in the GP and SD60s. Microprocessor controls, higher capacity alternators, and traction motors were just some of the improvements over the previous 50 series units that had sullied EMD's reputation just a few years previously. These improvements came none too soon, as arch-rival General Electric had made serious inroads of EMD's market share with their highly successful Dash-8 series locomotives, and EMD was now trailing GE in new locomotive sales.

Locomotive cabs had not seen many improvements in the US since dieselization began, and in the case of EMD, the same cab design had been used since the 35 series locomotives of 1964. Since 1973, the North American cab had been available in Canada, and was a preferred option for the Canadian National, having been built on orders of

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With ditch lights under the anticlimber and the nose door on the engineer's side, this is one version of the SD60, sporting an Isolated Cab. As a result, EMD labeled it the SD60I. Especially appealing is the arrangements of the MU hoses through the plow.

This is Burlington Northern's famous Cascade Green-and-Black with the "white face" variation. It has the ditch lights on top of the anticlimber and the nose door on the left side. It also eschewed the red marker lights, but it does sport the winterization hatch. This is included but it is a user installed part that we wanted to see this locomotive wear.

SD40-2, GP40-2, and GP38-2. The cab became popular in Canada originally due to the fact its design discouraged the build-up of snow around the doors. It also allowed more room for various cab appliances such as the toilet and a hot plate to heat meals, which was a standard feature in Canada.

By the 1980s, crew comfort and safety became ever more important. Spurred on by the Union Pacific and Santa Fe railroads, both EMD and GE began research into what crews desired for an improved cab environment. GE even went so far as to field a demonstration unit with a safety cab design, for the purpose of soliciting crew comments and suggestions for improvements. EMD paid close attention to this, and came up with their own version of the safety cab, which first appeared on an order of UP SD60s in early 1989.

Gone were the control stands dating back to 1939, and in their place were desktop controls, and a desk area for the conductor who now took his place with the engineer in the cab after the abolishment of cabooses in the 1980s. Heavy collision posts protected crews better than any cab design that came before, and numerous crews have survived wrecks because of this improvement. The new cab design caused the movement of the handbrake back along the long hood, necessitating a slight revision of the access doors under the radiator section on the engineer's side. Central heating and air systems were part of the package, and while cab A/C was an option before, gone were the days of the roof top A/C units dripping condensation down the neck of unsuspecting engineers! A/C systems were now standard because of the need for cooling for the onboard computers.

EMD's safety cab design went through several changes on the 60 series, with the first units having a three-piece windshield arrangement, later evolving to just two windows and a more tapered nose reminiscent of the F45 cowl units of the late 1960s. With the addition of the new cab, the model designation changed to SD60M, to denote the presence of the new cab.

Another variation later appeared, the SD60I. In an effort to improve crew

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The simulated steel dynamic brake fan grille located right behind the cab is a good detail touch that works with the rest of the roofline. EMD's straight-line hoods and relatively unlittered skyline contribute to the model's appeal. Installed handrails for the rear hood ladders are appreciated.

comfort and reduce fatigue, EMD developed the "Whisper Cab." Essentially it involved mounting the safety cab on rubber bushings, isolating it from the rest of the locomotive. The rubber absorbed much of the vibration and noise, and essentially gave the cab a floating feeling. While crews appreciated the improvement, many felt too isolated from their trains, and as the rubber aged and deteriorated, crews began complaining of the cabs moving around too much, causing much discomfort. Conrail was the only purchaser of SD60I.

The Model

The HO-scale SD60M/I is the latest diesel model in Athearn's highly regarded Genesis series of locomotives. Roadnames from the first run include Union Pacific, Burlington Northern, each in three numbers, and a single number for BNSF, this being the 9297 which had the distinction of being the test unit for the BNSF merger paint scheme. For the SD60I, three numbers are available in the Conrail Quality paint scheme. Undecorated UP and BN versions of the SD60M, and undecorated SD60Is are also available.

All roadnames and numbers are available with and without sound/DCC. A future run has been announced for the following roadnames: BNSF in the Heritage II scheme; BNSF in patched Burlington Northern green, black, and white; Union Pacific in the lightning stripe scheme; Conrail Quality; and Norfolk Southern. All are available in three numbers. Also available will be a single number for BN, the 1991, painted in the red, white, and blue Desert Storm commemorative paint scheme. An additional run of SD60Is was also announced with three numbers each for CSX in both the YN2 and YN3 paint schemes. The CSX units represent ex-Conrail locomotives. As before, all roadnames will be available with and without sound/DCC.

Our samples came decorated as the BN 9261, an SD60M, and the CR 5626, an SD60I. Both units soldier on today for new owners, with the 9261 becoming the BNSF 8161, and the 5626 going to Norfolk Southern as its 6749. Both are still in their original owners' colors as of this writing.

Once again, painting and lettering are very nicely done, and the warning labels are legible, but I recommend a magnifying glass to avoid eye strain. The dynamic brake fan is painted very intricately, and the radiator intake grilles are darkened to add depth. Colors appear to be correct, and even the Conrail blue appears to be spot on.

The detailing found on these models is breathtaking! Both units feature very road-specific details, having the correct horns, radio antennas, etc. applied per the prototype. Underframe details are also road-specific, and nicely done with air line from the air reservoirs to the appropriate air dryer castings. The fuel tanks are simply the best to be found from an HO-scale manufacturer. Pilot details are all there, and correctly done. The plows are wonderfully thin, and lead this writer to wish they were available as aftermarket detail parts, they are that good!

The BN unit had the optional winterization hatch packaged separately

Nose-to-nose comparison of the two versions shows the Isolation band around the nose of the blue Conrail loco. This is a specially-made gap that on the prototype contains a rubber isolation seal. After many years, these rubber seals have lost their resilience, and now the cabs wander around when the loco is in motion. This led to complaints from crew members. Pass the dramamine?

for the modeler to add as they see fit; the BN units were built with them, but many have since had them removed, so consult photographs for the time period you model before you decide to add it. I added mine, because it was simply too nice of a detail to leave off!

The dynamic intake grilles are well done, and in the case of the Conrail unit, are the correct flush mount style as used on the CR units. Walkway tread is present, and at least three different walkways were tooled so that the different variations would be available as required for each roadname. Flush mount glass, and etched brass sunshades are present where appropriate. The tooling overall is excellent, and Athearn really did their homework for the road-specific details.

Only a couple minor quibbles were to be found. First, Athearn used the tooling for the SD70M cabs for these units, and while doing so, the upper outer front windshield corners somehow got a squared appearance where they should be rounded. To their credit, they did correct the overly thick nose door. Second, the truck side frame bearings do not line up correctly with the inboard truck axles. This is from a discrepancy in the truck side frame tooling. While it's not very noticeable in operation, if you look closely, it's there. These two things are hardly reasons to not obtain these fine models, though.

Packaging

Like the other units in the Genesis series, these models came in sturdy boxes with foam linings, comparable to much more expensive brass offerings. One change for the SD60M/60I is the use of a wood block screwed to the underframe of the model. While this works very well in most cases, the screws holding the wooden block can strip out of the fuel tank, and the model is left free to flop around and get damaged, as our first Conrail sample was. It also has the drawback of making the model not very easy to test run at the hobby shop before purchase, and it eliminates the use of the box for short term storage or transport of the model. Athearn, I appreciate the effort to protect the model, but this system needs a rethink.

Operation

The models feature the excellent Roco five pole skew wound armature motor with the hex-style drive lines used in the earlier Genesis diesels. In fact, this motor is of such quality, numerous modelers, including this writer, are using it for re-powering older models to improve their running characteristics. It's that good! All axles are driven, and nickel-silver wheels are present. Operation is very smooth, and the units are quite hefty and will move a considerable amount of freight cars.

The BN unit came equipped with a sound decoder made by Model Rectifier. The engine sounds are distinctive and definitely sound like an EMD 710 series prime mover. The headlights and ditch lights illuminate somewhat slowly to simulate the action of a high wattage lamp. It's a nice effect, and one I rather like. The ditch lights on the BN unit flash back and forth with the horn, another nice touch. One minor point on the ditch lights: they are cast in green plastic, and the light from their bulbs bleeds through the plastic in back; a touch of green paint will fix that nicely.

Since the Conrail unit arrived as a straight DC model, we tested it that way. After all, something like two-thirds of HO model railroaders are still straight DC folks. The loco has a constant voltage lighting circuit in it that works very well for the light, but it seems to interfere with low voltage operation of the loco. As a result, it wouldn't start reliably until the voltage got up to around six volts, at which time it leaped to about 20 scale miles per hour.

Into this loco we put a TCS T-1 Back EMF decoder. This gave us an astonishing minimum speed of 0.2 scale miles per hour! This was right out of the package, as was the 109 scale mile per hour top end. We set out to correct that through programming, and that's where the secondary circuitry of the constant lighting reared up again. We got to around CV5=75 with the speed down to about 88 smph and the next reduction to 74 dipped the top speed to about 67 smph. We tried another T-1, but the situation remained the same.

The MRC decoder replaces the Athearn power board, and so it has its own characteristics. Starting at 7 or 8 smph is some improvement over the straight DC version but this decoder lacks the BEMF to get really slow speed response. The analog DC top speed at 16 volts is very reasonable; the DCC top speed is quite high. We were able to moderate it to a degree through programming.

Summary

Athearn has once more given modelers a much needed modern locomotive, and the road-specific detailing more than makes it worth buying. The tooling, the operation, and overall appearance makes this a model worth having on any modeler's layout, and it is certain to fly off the shelves. Don't miss getting one!

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REVIEW N

Sanding facilities kit adds interest to N-scale layouts

Review and Photos by Al Skinner

N-scale Sanding Tower & Drying House kit, MSRP: $29.98

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WALTHERS has produced a beautiful American-style N-scale sanding tower kit for steam and diesel locos, one that will add both good detail and a prototypical feel to your engine facilities.

Sanding the rails has been the standard way of providing traction for locomotives since the early days. Each engine carried its sand supply in a closed box or dome atop the boiler. The engineer pulled on a linkage to open valves and let sand run down pipes that directed it into the juncture of rail and driving wheels. As the usage and number of locos multiplied, hand-loading the sand dome was too time-consuming and inefficient. The invention of the air compressor in the mid-1800s converted the process to mechanical means. Sand brought in by railcar was offloaded into a bin, screened and dried in a coal-fired kiln, then pumped with air pressure through pipes to a holding tank above the tracks.

There are many different styles of sand towers. A quick check of the internet shows square bins, box-like supports, cylinders on pylons or beams, even what looks like a small silo or giant boiler. This Walthers version is not of any specific prototype, but most of us post-steamer railroaders will recognize it: a big cylinder on end at the top of a tall pylon, with pipes angling and hoses dangling from it. There's also a variant of a smaller, older style tower.

Though this is a kit of relatively small structures there are lots of parts. Lots of small parts. It helps to be a craftsman to build it; however, if you are careful and patient you will be able to produce a fine model. Most importantly, you need to be careful removing the parts from the sprue. Handle them gently. Tweezers are a definite requirement here. The instructions are generally clear but you will be checking all the pictures on the box to get different views of the finished structures. Be advised that the N box cover has a photo of the HO version, which has variations from this kit.

I'll do this review by sections as listed on the instruction sheets.

Drying House

Here you're basically making a little house. Pretty straightforward, with a clearly numbered diagram. After assembling the chimney, I found the opening at the top was a very small hole. To hide this you could paint the chimney opening black, or, as I did, use a needle file to widen the opening by sanding back the edges of the chimney walls.

Though no footprint of the building arrangement comes in the instructions, this scene represents a fairly reasonable layout for the sand tower. The sand bin has a track next to its far side for loads to be delivered. And don't forget all the spilled sand around the tower from sloppy filling. No matter how crowded your engine facility gets, these towers will still stand out above it all.

Since sanding towers are usually right in the middle of frequent locomotive (and giant hand) movement on a layout, I didn't fasten down the towers. Instead I filled the bases of both with moldable lead to keep them from being top-heavy

"The Devil Is In the Bevels" (An Aside).

Cast plastic parts today, including some in this kit, have slightly beveled edges. It's only a slight bevel, but it does prevent a complete surface-to-surface contact when gluing the parts together. In this case, the bottom edges of the house walls had bevels, which I lightly sanded off before gluing them to the base. But I had more bevel adventures ahead.

Sand Bin

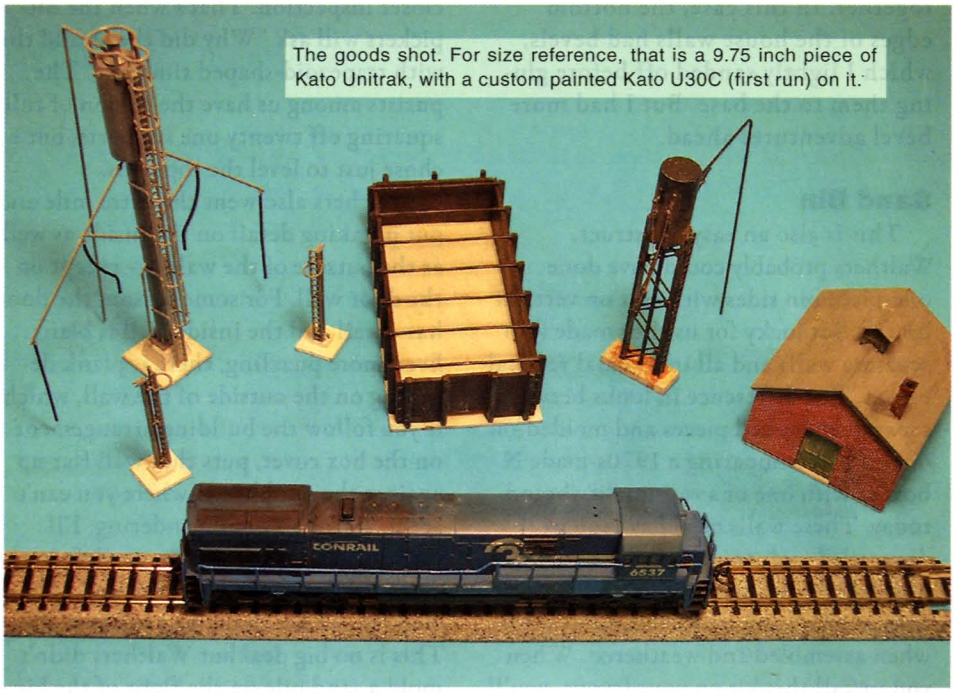
This is also an easy construct. Walthers probably could have done one-piece bin sides with cast on vertical braces. But lucky for us they made four separate walls and all individual vertical braces. The difference in looks between separately applied pieces and molded-on ones is like comparing a 1970s-made N boxcar with one of a top-quality brand today. These walls even have square dovetailed ends to make it look like individual interlocking timbers at the corners. This bin looks absolutely great when assembled and weathered. When you install this kit on your layout, you'll want to put the sand delivery track up near the front to showcase this beauty.

That said, the bevels come back to haunt us, not only are they found on the bottom of the bin walls, the vertical braces have beveled sides and ends as well. This is barely noticeable from afar, but no doubt this little gem will invite closer inspection. That's when the nit-pickers will ask "Why did they build this with trapezoid-shaped timbers?" The purists among us have the option of fully squaring off twenty one supports, but I chose just to level the top ends.

Walthers also went the extra mile and put planking detail on the inside as well as the outside of the walls — except on the door wall. For some reason, the door has detail and the inside wall is blank. Even more puzzling, there is plank detailing on the outside of the wall, which, if you follow the building arrangement on the box cover, puts that wall flat up against the sand house where you can't see it. As long as I'm wondering, I'll mention that there was no gap left in the floor sill for the door in this wall (I chiseled one with a flat-edged hobby knife). This is no big deal but Walthers didn't mold a sand pile on the floor of the bin. For the picky modeler it would be easy to cut out the molded pile and install his own, but the beginner would have his sand pile done for him. Still, this is a very nifty structure.

Small Sanding Tower

To be technical, this is actually a



The goods shot. For size reference, that is a 9.75 inch piece of Kato Unitrak, with a custom painted Kato U30C (first run) on it.

"steam-era" tower, built differently from the larger one. A pre-OSHA, rivet-and-strut, muscle-power sand tower. The solid metal spouts were manhandled down to fill a steamer's sand dome, always located on the top center of the boiler. So the tower was built where the solid-pipe spout's end could swing down centered on each track.

Construction is easy but now you have to start being very careful. The small pieces are delicate and fragile. I found the small tank supports a real chore to install. Please note one of the big supports, to which the ladder attaches, has two small nubs on the inner side. This shows clearly on the drawing but is not mentioned in the text, so install it correctly.

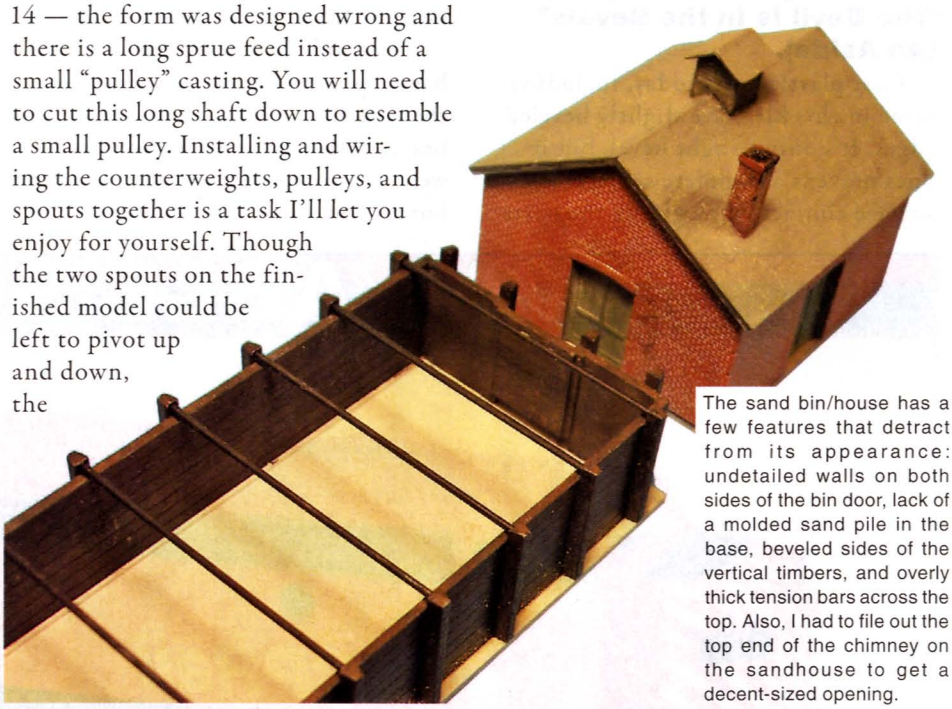
The slots in my concrete base were too narrow to fit the supports (I suspect bevels). I widened them slightly with a sharp hobby knife blade.

I found a casting fault with parts 14 — the form was designed wrong and there is a long sprue feed instead of a small "pulley" casting. You will need to cut this long shaft down to resemble a small pulley. Installing and wiring the counterweights, pulleys, and spouts together is a task I'll let you enjoy for yourself. Though the two spouts on the finished model could be left to pivot up and down, the wire "cable" holding them will not. So you are left with the option of which one or both is permanently left up or down. No matter — the final, detailed structure is really good-looking.

Large Sanding Tower

Again, a short history: Once diesels came along, sand boxes were installed in different places on different engine types. A flexible, variable-length "spout" was needed. Thus, hoses, with one in place on either side of the track, to reach sand boxes in different places and at different heights.

This sanding tower is the impressive centerpiece of the kit, a well-detailed masterpiece. Lots of pieces, and again care is needed for assembly. The instructions and drawings are clear and complete. Some pieces have small notches or nibs to help you assemble them correctly. For the top circular railing stanchions



The sand bin/house has a few features that detract from its appearance: undetailed walls on both sides of the bin door, lack of a molded sand pile in the base, beveled sides of the vertical timbers, and overly thick tension bars across the top. Also, I had to file out the top end of the chimney on the sandhouse to get a decent-sized opening.

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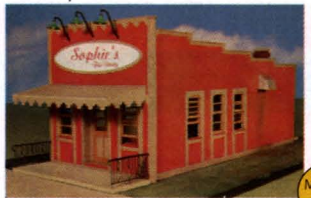

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to fit I needed to drill out the mounting holes with a #60 bit (carefully!)

This is a beautiful tower, but I saw two minor discrepancies. Most obvious is the awkward hanging curves on the shorter (upper) hoses. Maybe in the pictures the kit designers used they didn't notice the almost invisible lines that are those hoses' tension-loaded support cables. However, that is the reason they are hanging in that bent position. You can fix it easily by attaching thin wire (same as recommended for the counterweight lines) between the elbow bends of each hose and the tower.

Secondly, I wonder why there are no steps/platforms provided for these hoses. The pictures of prototypes show such access platforms — because that's a lo-o-o-o-ong reach from the ground.

Decals

A good selection of appropriate decals is provided. They seem grossly outsized (2.5 scale feet wide). I suggest kit manufacturers switch from decals to printed signs for all future kits, at least in N scale. I don't think we really care if anyone can read them without magnifiers — look at the microscopic yet readable lettering on our rolling stock — but on a fine kit like this, correct-sized signs are a must.

Colors

I painted the house roof, doors and vent, all the concrete bases, and used dark colors on that great sand bin to bring out the details. But the sand towers plastic colors are pretty much dead-on. I painted only the "rubber" hoses on the diesel tower black. I also painted the "steam" tower black, because back then black was what they painted everything. The house walls I sprayed with a can of Dullcote and when it dried rubbed chalk dust into the mortar lines.

Closing Thoughts

I would have liked a footprint diagram showing how these structures were located in relation to each other and the track. The sand bin, great as it is, will look even better once I replace the kit's thick plastic tension bars with thin brass rod. This isn't Walther's fault — they can cast plastic only so thin or it would break just being boxed.

Speaking of broken parts, I had several come that way in my kit. Thanks to Dennis at Walther's Customer Service for carefully bubble-wrapping the replacements and sending them on.

Overall, I rate this kit a winner. It takes some care and effort but it's worth it. And it really gives us N scalers the transition-era engine service structures we need.

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Bar Mills releases first injection-molded kit

The new industrial water tower from Bar Mills is the company's first injection molded kit.

HO — Well known craftsman kit manufacturer Bar Mills Scale Model Works is branching out, releasing its first injection-molded plastic kit. The newest addition: a small industrial water tower based on a prototype in the New York area.

The water tower features rivet detail, gusset plates, and steel sheathing, along with ladders and handrails. Included in the kit are Micro-Scale decals, giving modelers the choice of decaling their tower with "Packard Motor Co.," Studebaker Motor Co.," "Beech-Nut Baby Food," "Otis Elevator," and "Smith Bros. Cough Drops." Also included is a decal sheet with the words "Welcome To" accompanied by an entire alphabet so the tank can be personalized for unique locations.

Bar Mill's Industrial Water Tower (#0132) retails for $29.95, and is available at your local hobby shop or through Bar Mills directly. Keep watching these pages for a full review.

Bar Mills Scale Model Works, P.O. Box 609, Bar Mills, ME 04004; Phone/Fax: 207-929-3400; E-mail: barmillsmodels@yahoo.com; www.barmillsmodels.com

The Crab Shack, one of many small town attractions

This rustic little seaside restaurant is the perfect place for tourists to stop by to get a bite to eat, or it can serve as a town's local hangout.

HO — Nick & Nora Designs has announced their newest craftsman kit, the Crab Shack. The many roadside crab stands and seafood restaurants along the Chesapeake Bay region inspired this kit. These small, local eateries have become local hangouts, and every small town has that one special place everyone claims is "the only place to buy crabs."

This kit comes complete with laser-cut scribed and clapboard basswood walls, scale lumber trim, large picture windows, detailed and illustrated instructions, and bright colorful graphics. This kit retails for $49.95.

Nick & Nora Designs, 12 Penny Lane, Newark, DE 19702; 302-366-7506; Fax: 302-283-1042; www.nickandnoradesigns.com

New Illinois Central depots from American Model Builders

N — American Model Builders has released a new type A depot. The Illinois Central built a series of new, smaller depots during the post WWII era as a cost-savings measure. The building is now available.

Many of the Illinois Central's older depots were in need of extensive repairs and the decline of passenger service on several lines made it more economical to tear down the original structure and then build a replacement out of new and salvaged lumber. The type "A" was one of the largest of the four standard designs measuring 36-feet 3-inches in length and 16-feet 3-inches wide at the end walls. It had a separate waiting room for passengers, an office for the agent, and an express-baggage-freight area.

The AMB depot features custom laser-scribed and cut plywood walls and roof, a white metal chimney, and a screen door on the passenger waiting room, as well as Peel & Stick windows (with individual sashes), doors, trim, and 3-tab shingles. The kit may be built with either the passenger waiting room on the left or right hand side. When assembled, the type A depot measures 3 inches long by 1.5 inches wide by 1.25 inches high. The kit (#618) retails for $32.95.

The type A depots were built along the Illinois Central route after World War II to replace older, dilapidated buildings. The type "A" was one of the largest of four standard designs.

American Model Builders, 8229 Brentwood Industrial Dr, Saint Louis, MO 63144; 314-646-8588; Fax: 314-646-8583; E-mail: laserkit@sbcglobal.com; www.laserkit.com

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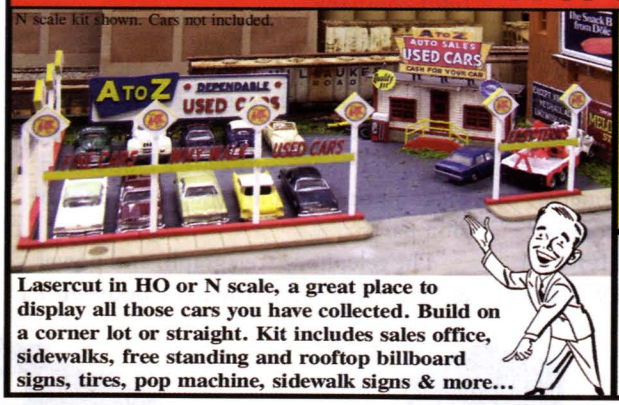

N scale kit shown. Cars not included.

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REVIEW HO & N

CMW's Utility Trucks keep the system working

Classic Metal Works' new Ford F-350 Utility Trucks are a welcome addition to the roster of vehicles available in HO- and N-scales. Clockwise from lower left: Bell System and Western Union line trucks and New York Central and Pennsylvania MOW trucks.

Review and Photos by Bill Cawthon

1954 Ford F-350 Utility Truck, HO scale, MSRP: $14.00 each
1954 Ford F-350 Utility Truck, N scale, MSRP: $15.00/pkg. of two

CMW Holdings, Ltd.
3401 Silica Rd.
Sylvania, OH 43560
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www.classicmetalworks.com

ONE vehicle that has been missing from HO- and N-scale Transition-Era fleets is the utility truck. These are the trucks used by telecommunications companies, railroads, and power companies to handle maintenance and repairs, and generally keep the various transmission and distribution systems up and running. Street and highway departments also used them for signal repairs and other jobs.

While a pickup might have served these requirements in terms of being able to carry a load, the utility body, with its lockable compartments, offered both security and protection from the elements for tools and replacement components.

Classic Metal Works has introduced these versatile trucks for both HO- and N-scales. They're based on CMW's 1954 Ford F-350 pickup that was reviewed in the February 2008 issue of *Model Railroad News* and share the same chassis, cab, and wheels. The eight-foot pickup body has been replaced with a utility body and CMW has supplied components to make them look right for either utility or MOW use.

The Models

The trucks are offered without markings in white, Omaha Orange, and chrome yellow, typical colors for power company or government use, as well as decorated for the Union Pacific, Pennsylvania, New York Central, and Santa Fe railroads, and Bell Telephone, Western Union, and a generic power & light company.

The railroad MOW and undecorated trucks come with the basic utility body with an open center section and two sprues of parts to be added by the modeler. On one sprue are a ladder and rack; on the other are the hi-rail conversion parts.

The telephone, telegraph, and power & light trucks have the basic body with a cap that encloses the center section and a single sprue holding a ladder, line tools, and brackets for the ladder.

Since the basic truck is the same as the one previously reviewed, I won't go into much detail about it except to say this iteration looks much better. I think my positive reaction to this version is largely due to the fact the utility body is a significant improvement over the pickup body. The molding is better, the lines and edges are sharper, and it enhances the appearance of this purpose-built truck.

On the samples I received, the paint was quite good and the printing was sharp and opaque.

Finishing the models with the supplied parts is fairly easy. You'll need a hobby knife with a fresh blade and I would recommend a pair of flush-cutting nippers. Diagrams for installing the parts can be found on the reverse side of the package backing card.

Starting with the Western Union truck, simply detach the ladder, brackets, and line tools from the sprue. Remove

The trucks come with extra pieces to be added by the modeler. The line trucks come with a single sprue, the MOW trucks have two sprues. Shown here are N-scale trucks as they come from CMW and in finished form.

the cap from the utility body, slide the brackets in as shown in the diagram, and reseat the cap on the body. Snap the ladder into the brackets, press the line tools into the appropriate holes, and your truck is ready for duty.

The N-scale version is even easier: there aren't any brackets. Snip the ladder and line tools from the sprue, press them into the appropriate holes, and you're done.

The MOW trucks are a bit more complex, unless you don't want the hi-rail trucks. In that case, just separate the ladder and brackets from the sprue, snap the bracket tabs into the slots on the utility body, snap the ladder onto the clips, and pop the finished truck on your layout.

If you want a hi-rail version, there may be a little more work involved. Let's make one thing clear: the design is first-rate; it's the execution that came up a bit short on my samples and the problems I found may not appear on the models you get at your local hobby shop.

The hi-rail trucks for the HO model call for assembling two pieces for each truck and then pressing the completed assembly into holes in the chassis. The N-scale truck has just a single piece for each end.

The wheel assemblies have holes that are supposed to fit onto pegs on the front and rear extensions. After a couple of attempts to fit Hole A onto Peg B, I took a look at the holes. Sure enough, one hole on each wheel assembly wasn't molded large enough to fit. Using a No. 61 drill bit in a pin vise, I enlarged the holes and fit everything together. It's not required, but I added a drop of solvent-type plastic adhesive to secure everything. I am sure a small drop of ACC would work just as well.

When the glue was set up, I attempted to install the assembled trucks onto the chassis. The front set worked fine, but the rear had one peg that would not seat to the proper depth. Rather than trying to drill out the metal frame, I used the hobby knife to whittle down the peg until it fit.

The N-scale truck had a similar problem; this time it was the front truck. A couple of minutes' worth of trimming the peg and test fitting did the trick.

You may need to fine-tune the height of the hi-rail trucks. Don't forget; the truck's road wheels are supposed on touch the rails, too.

Once again, let me emphasize that

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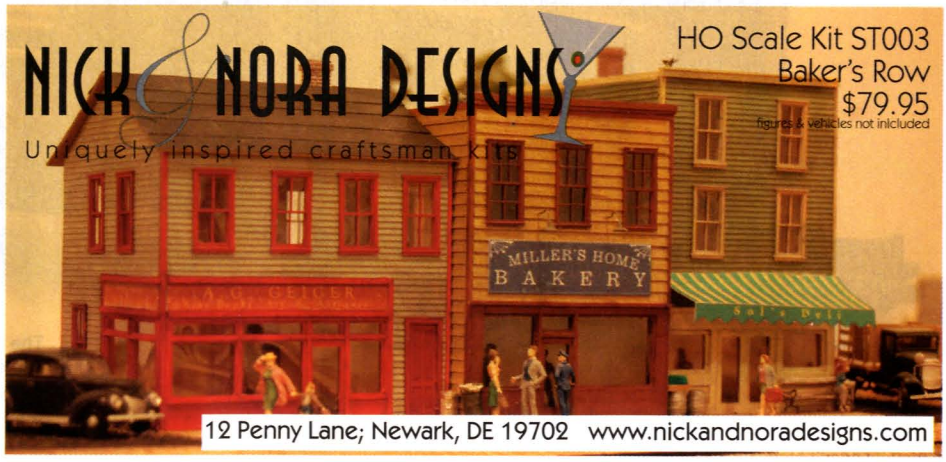

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The MOW trucks are pretty nice, but the ladder racks in both scales are a bit on the chunky side and look like they could carry lengths of 110-pound rail. The hi-rail trucks need to be adjusted to ensure the truck's driving wheels touch the rail.

you may not encounter these problems on your models and the time required to fix them, outside of hunting down drill bits and pin vise, is only a couple of minutes.

I do like the way CMW thought out these models. My only real complaint is that the ladder brackets on the telephone and telegraph trucks were a bit oversized.

Final Thoughts

Additional finishing of the trucks is up to you. You might want to add some light weathering, especially to the wheels, and, depending on the particular truck operator, perhaps an amber or red warning light as these trucks often had them.

The CMW utility trucks will make great mini-scenes on your layout. Just add a couple of workmen and you're done. If your pike is set in the mid-to-late 1950s, I highly recommend you check out these models next time you visit your favorite hobby retailer.

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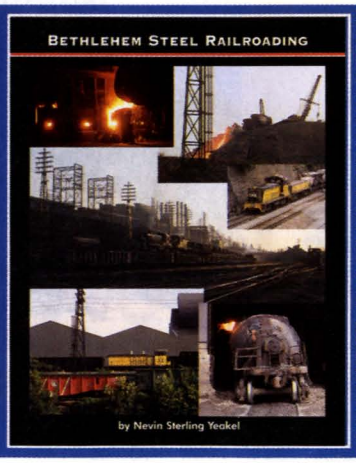

Features 70 photos (37 color and 33 b/w). Many of these are seldom seen views taken inside the plant. PB&NE, LV, RDG, D&H, CR, BSCO Narrow Gauge and other private Bethlehem Steel equipment are shown, including hot metal cars, cinder pots and heavy-duty flatcars with loads. 8 maps, plus charts listing tracks, crew assignments and interchanges.

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Ton trailer rigs and modern tractor trailers from Trunks N' Stuff

HO — Trucks 'N Stuff is producing HO-scale Ton tractor-trailer rigs custom-decorated for a number of real-world trucking companies such as Knight, Marten, and Western, headed up by a modern Peterbilt 389 or Kenworth W900 with Studio Sleeper. The trucks are available in various colors for $13.99 each.

Rigs such as the modern Peterbilt 389 and Kenworth W900 are commonly found on interstates and highways across North America hauling for major trucking companies or the independent owner/operator. Watch the pages of *MRN* in the coming months for a full review.

Trucks N' Stuff, P.O. Box 30772, Stockton, CA 95213-0772; 209-469-0115; Fax: 209-469-0882; E-mail: TNStruckmodels@aol.com

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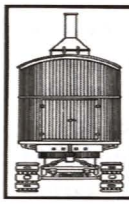

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Review and Photos by John Sipple

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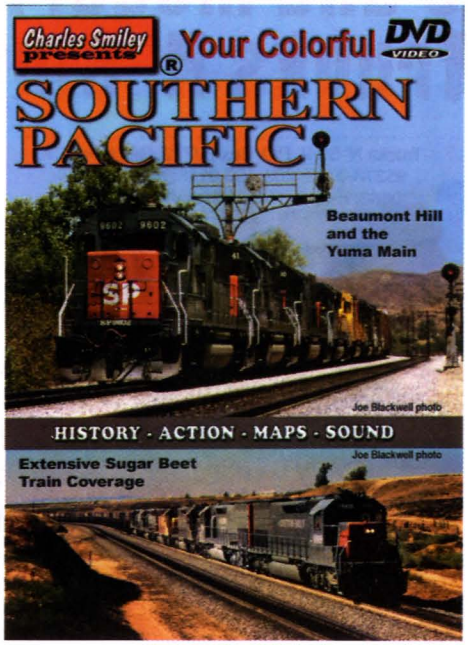
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Joe Blackwell photo

FETCH out a map of California and Arizona and locate Yuma. Along those two states' common border, way down at the edge of Mexico, sits the desert community of Yuma. For Southern Pacific, this city was a hub of activity.

The Transcontinental line had gone as far south as it would and now headed east. Yuma is part of the greening of the desert in that area, growing a wide variety of crops that required all sort of agricultural support from the railroad. As a result, it is top-notch trainchasing country.

This area is called the Imperial Valley and it also has the Colorado River running through it after it bordered between California and Arizona, plunging down into Old Mexico. In this video, we get to follow trains headed north out of Yuma, up to Niland, past the east side of the Salton Sea, and eventually up to West Colton Yards in the LA Basin. The power on the point is made of SD40T-2 "tunnel motors," SD45s, GP60s, GEs from that vintage, pairs of C44-9Ws, and more.

We get to see four-, five-, and six-unit lashups, roaring their guts out until they drop off their helpers and have easier going. My grandkids especially like the double-track action where a train snaking around serpentine curves was met by another train going the opposite direction on the adjacent track. The photographic position is excellent and the effect is stunning.

This is early nineties vintage trains from the time before SP got swallowed up by UP and nearly choked Old Yaller. The SP/SF merger had already failed, the Rio Grande merger had gone through but didn't help a lot, and SP had to borrow or lease a lot of power to keep up with the demands of additional traffic. The result shows up as colorful lashup with run-through CSX and other roadnames, leasing company rigs, some unrepainted SPSF "Kodachromes" and a couple of varieties of SP's "Bloody Nose."

Even back then, much of the traffic was in containers, though large blocks of general merchandise were common, too. The road from Ogilby to Niland gives us some fine desert train footage, but Charles Smiley warns us there are no services along its length. Niland is the junction from the line running up out of El Centro a couple of hours west of Yuma, though there isn't a direct line between them.

We are taken up by Garnet, California where we see trains running near acres of wind turbines rotating lazily as a back-

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drop. Model that! We stay on the line up through Cabazon, Beaumont, and into West Colton Yards. The arduous Yuma Main ends here.

We turn to the run south of Niland down to El Centro. This gets us started with sugar beets, and we'll back on that theme again in a bit. This line also exchanged cars with Mexican railways. Mostly, this line traverses agricultural lands made possible by irrigation. El Centro was a hub that connected Niland, Mexico, Holtville, the San Diego, Arizona & Eastern RR, and local sugar beet interests. This leads to a seventies cab ride on the SDA&E. What fun!

This is hard railroading, but we see wooden trestles, tunnels with wooden porticos, water tanks, and other wonderful modeling opportunities. Seeley, near El Centro, is on the SDA&E and is a transfer site for sugar beets. It is here we drift into the sugar beet rail business. Eight different plants in California took in beets from the SP and converted them into sugar in various forms. I could see a series of DVDs detailing how various commodities were handled.

For example, we get to view a cable system that pulls the train cars slowly under the loading conveyor. Then a tractor with a cable kicks loaded cars as the cable disconnects by itself (we hope!) A pair of SW1500 switchers take over and build trains to be taken out by road power. Steel hoppers led the consist, but the majority of the train was old beet gondolas. By the time this footage was taken, these old wood sided and extended cars that still had friction bearing trucks were now fifty years old and just about out of time. If you want to model diesels pulling old wood, here's your prototype.

Up in the Simi Valley, our beet train is on its way to the processing plant. They are headed for Betteravia, up near Santa Maria on the Coast Line. We get to see views of the Coast Line and then visit the Betteravia Holly Sugar Plant. The Santa Maria Valley Shortline handles the cars from Guadalupe into Betteravia using an interesting collections of GE 70 tonners generally operated in pairs. They also had a GE U6B, a locomotive built for export.

The sugar beet cars are of the drop bottom type, but the beets are cantankerous things that hang up for virtually no reason at all, so high pressure water is used to jar them loose and send them tumbling down to the intake augers. All of the sugar is extracted, and the remaining pulp would be made into animal feed.

The next sequence follows the sugar beets north to the Klamath Falls area where we find sets of SD9s pulling the old wooden drop bottom beet gons. As the sugar plants closed, so did the fields that supplied them, and the beet sugar industry of Southern Pacific is no longer what it once was.

A very colorful video, indeed!

Well, Charles Smiley has done it again. Some of this footage appeared in one of his titles no longer in print, but this is a much better rounded collection. Starting in Yuma, Arizona and ending up in Klamath Falls, Oregon with trips up to West Colton Yards, down the SDA&E, chasing beets up to Betteravia, and seeing to final years of SP in action, this is a very entertaining and informative video. You want stuff to model? It's in here, though I can't tell you what you'll glom onto and turn into a feature on your layout. Maybe you'll just watch this for an hour and 35 minutes instead of broadcast TV. What a thought!

Two New Books for 2009
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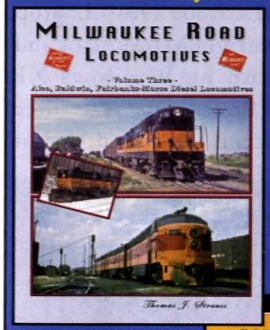

Coming Soon!
This is the third volume of a set which features Milwaukee Road Locomotives in-depth. There are many photographs, both black & white and color, featuring diesel locomotives built by Alco, Baldwin, Fairbanks-Morse. This book is written by a retired Milwaukee Road engineer who worked very closely with all of these locomotive types.
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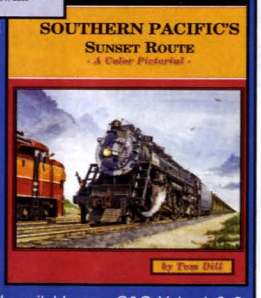

A few Color Pictorials still available are: C&O Vols. 1 & 2, NYC Vols 1-4, PRR 1-5, IC Vols. 1 & 2, KCS, NH 1-3, NP 1, D&RGW 1, Pool Power West, SF in the Lone Star State, SP's San Joaquin Valley Line, SP's Overland Route, SP's Coast Line, Rock Island Vols, 2 & 3, Texas & New Orleans, Western Maryland 1, WP 1 & 2, Wisconsin Central 1 & 2.

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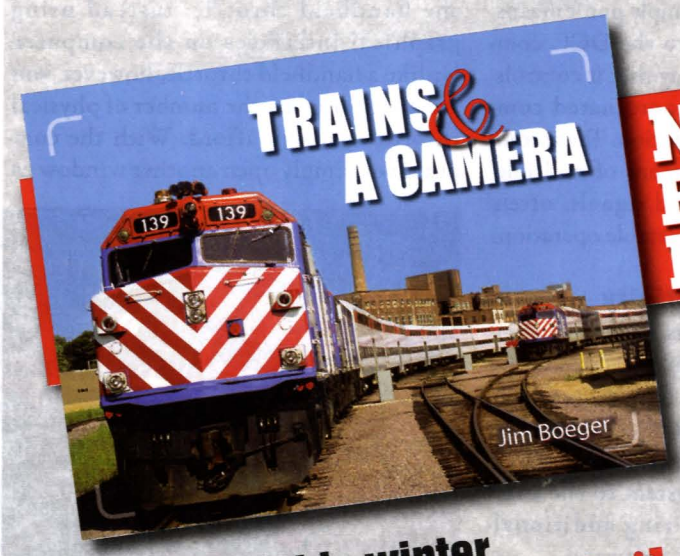

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Project DCC - Integrating Operation and Automation
Part 9A, Computer Control Introduction & Familiarization, Part 1

— By Phil Scandura

Last month we added grade crossing signals to our layout, keeping those pesky automobiles out of harm's way. This month we near the culmination of the Project DCC series, namely the addition of computer automation. Discussed over five installments, this month and next we'll explore the basic concepts of computer control, following up with manual control and finally full layout automation over the next three months.

Computer Control Overview

For the purists in the audience our layout is already running under computer control, since lurking inside every DCC command station is a miniature computer of sorts called a microprocessor or microcontroller. It does the hard work of issuing commands to the various locomotive decoders, turnout controllers, and accessory decoders scattered about the layout. These devices use their own microcontroller to accept and carry out the commands. So what exactly does putting the Project DCC layout under computer control actually mean? Simply put it means connecting a computer to the DCC command station in such a way that it controls the layout by sending coordinated commands to the command station. These commands govern the movement of multiple trains, control routes and signals, often under the guidance of timetable operation.

Computer Connectivity

Not all DCC systems support a computer interface, so if you're interested in computer control you'll want to research the system you're interested in before making a purchase. Further, the method of connecting the DCC system to the computer vary, some requiring additional hardware (and of course, software).

Today's DCC systems exhibit two different types of connectivity; network connectivity and command station connectivity. Network connectivity involves tapping into the DCC network or command bus, while command station connectivity involves a direct connection to the command station. Network connectivity typically requires a special interface device, while command station connectivity typically uses a standard serial interface.

The DCC systems used by Project DCC employ the network connectivity method, each using their own special interface device (shown in the photos). These devices include communication software to allow the computer to recognize and use the device (all supported Microsoft Windows only.

"Manual" vs. "Automated" Control

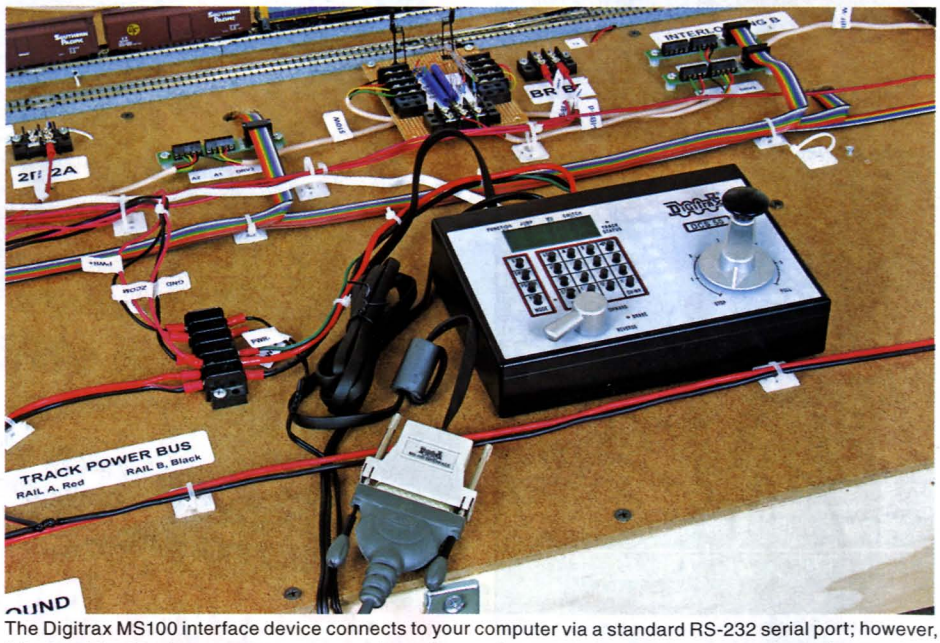
For the remainder of the Project DCC series we'll be using the computer to run the layout. It will control turnouts to set routes, ensure that trackside signals reflect the proper status of the blocks they protect, govern train movements, and various other tasks. Even though we'll be using the computer, there is still a notion of "manual" vs. "automated" control. With manual control you command turnouts to change position, control trains with virtual throttles, and even change signal aspects if you desire. You accomplish these tasks in much the same way you can with the handheld throttle, instead using graphical interfaces on the computer. Unlike a handheld throttle, however, you are not limited by the number of physical throttles you can afford. With the computer you simply open another window to create another throttle. The only limitation is truly how many trains you can keep track of at any one time.

With automated control you define the origin and destination for the train, you define the allowable route it can take, and you define the speed limits along the route. Once all these items are defined, you hand over control to the computer and it pilots the train along the route. Some of the more sophisticated software packages include conflict resolution that can route one train around another, taking advantage of alternate routes between the origin and destination.

Software Package Overviews

Let's take a brief look at each of the software packages used in Project DCC. Each will be covered in more detail in the manual and automated computer control installments (parts 10A, 10B, and 11).

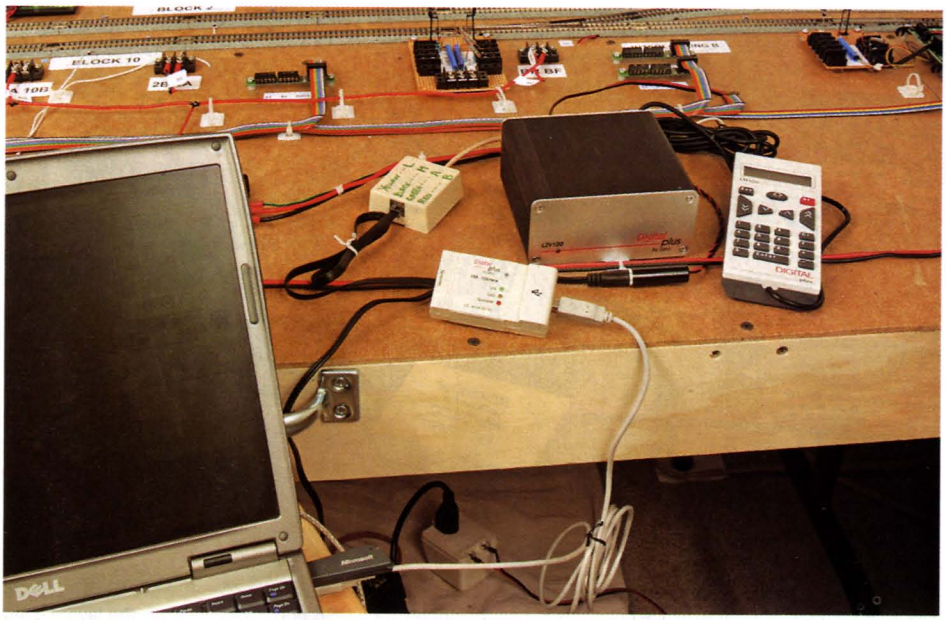
All of the packages require Microsoft Windows; only **Panel Pro** from **JMRI Freeware** offers support for Mac and Linux. Testing for Project DCC was performed on a Dell Latitude D610 Laptop, with a 1.86GHz Pentium M processor and 512MB RAM running Windows XP Professional. Since Project DCC has three different DCC systems and four different



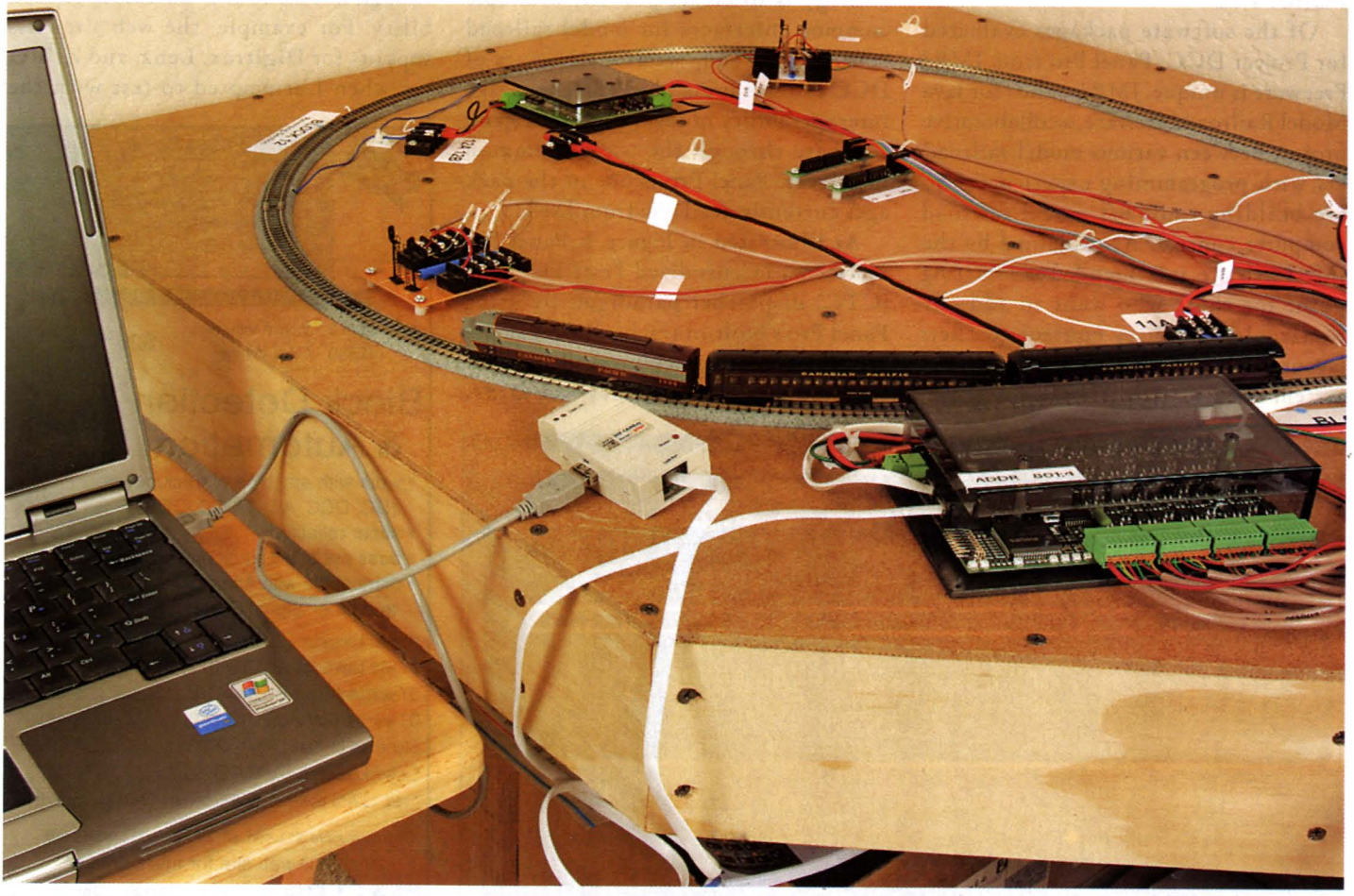
The Digitrax MS100 interface device connects to your computer via a standard RS-232 serial port; however, it is the older 25-pin type so you may need an adapter since today's computers prefer the 9-pin type. You can purchase an adapter at most computer stores. Connecting to the layout uses the included modular cable that can be plugged into LocoNet anywhere on the layout.

software packages, no attempt was made to evaluate every package on every system. Instead, the goal was to evaluate at least two packages on each DCC system.

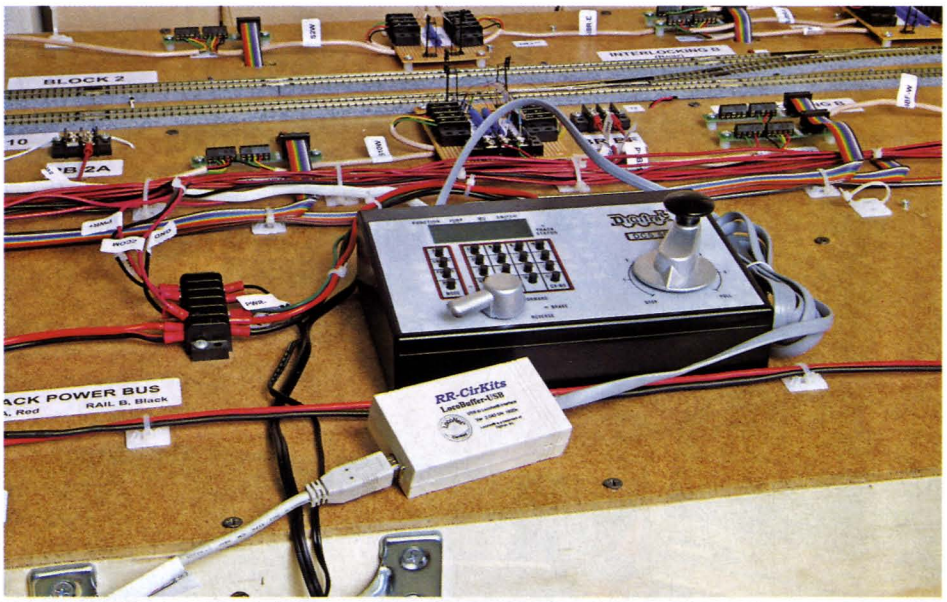
A quick disclaimer is in order regarding software versions. As anyone who works with software will tell you, it is a moving target. Version updates are released on a regular basis (with some companies, this is monthly) making it nearly impossible to review a software product and publish the review in a timely basis, that is, before the next update is released. Such is the case with all four software packages used in Project DCC. As you may have already guessed, Project DCC is a major undertaking that took a year to build, test, and write, and another year to publish. Attempting to keep up with software updates would have delayed the series by many months. When it comes time for you to choose a software package, request an evaluation copy of the latest version.



The Lenz LI-USB XpressNet interface device connects to your computer via a USB port. If your layout already includes XpressNet command bus ports you can use these to connect the LI-USB to the layout. Since the Project DCC layout doesn't have such a bus we created an adapter to connect the modular cable to command station terminals (more information on creating an adapter can be found in the Lenz manuals). The LI-USB includes device interface software, a virtual throttle, CV editor, and USB configuration tool.



The LocoBuffer-USB from RR-CirKits interface device connects to your computer via a USB port. Connecting to the layout uses the included modular cable that can be plugged into Digitrax LocoNet anywhere on the layout. Thanks to deep command and response buffers, the LocoBuffer-USB is capable of handling more bus traffic than the Digitrax MS100. The advantages of this became especially apparent during trackside signal testing. It seems the quantity and number of commands coming from the layout software often overwhelmed the MS100, causing some commands to be lost. As a result, the signals didn't always change aspects when commanded. When using the LocoBuffer-USB, however, no commands were lost and the signals always reflected the proper aspect.



The STP CANKey interface device connects to your computer via a USB port. Connecting to the layout uses the included modular cable. You can plug into the CAN bus anywhere on the layout; here we used a free port on a nearby MX8. The CANKey also serves as a license key for the STP layout control software, meaning that it must be connected to the PC in order to run the software. If you happen to be creating or editing your layout diagram at your desk, as opposed to at the layout, you'll need to have the CANKey with you.

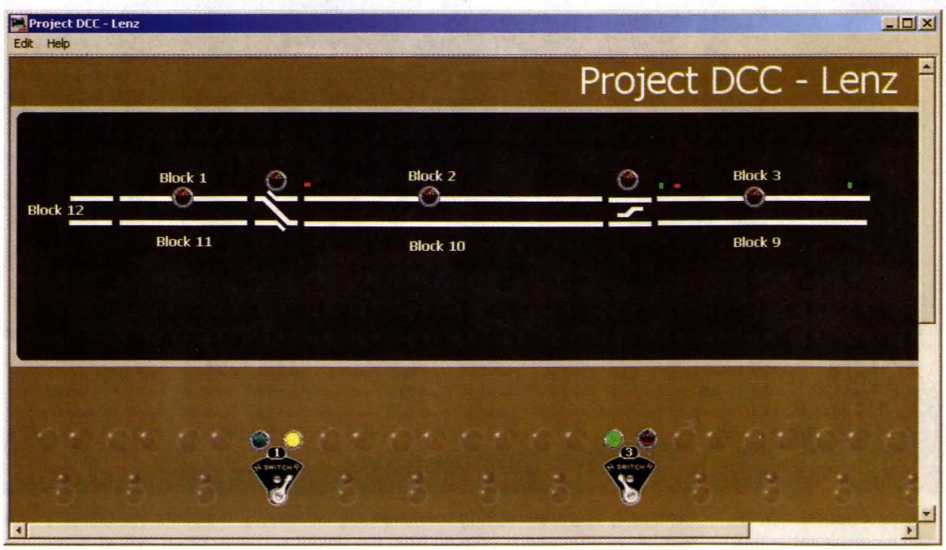
Panel Pro

Of the software packages evaluated for Project DCC, Panel Pro from JMRI Freeware is unique. JMRI stands for Java Model Railroad Interface, a collaborative project between various model railroaders with programming experience who are building tools for model railroad computer control. As explained by the JMRI web site, it is intended as a starting point for those who want to add customizable computer control to their layouts without having to create an entire system from scratch. JMRI's long-term strategy is to create publicly available common interfaces for model railroad control code, support as many types of DCC systems as possible, and encourage interoperability of layout hardware and software through the use of common interfaces. Panel Pro is one of the packages currently available from JMRI.

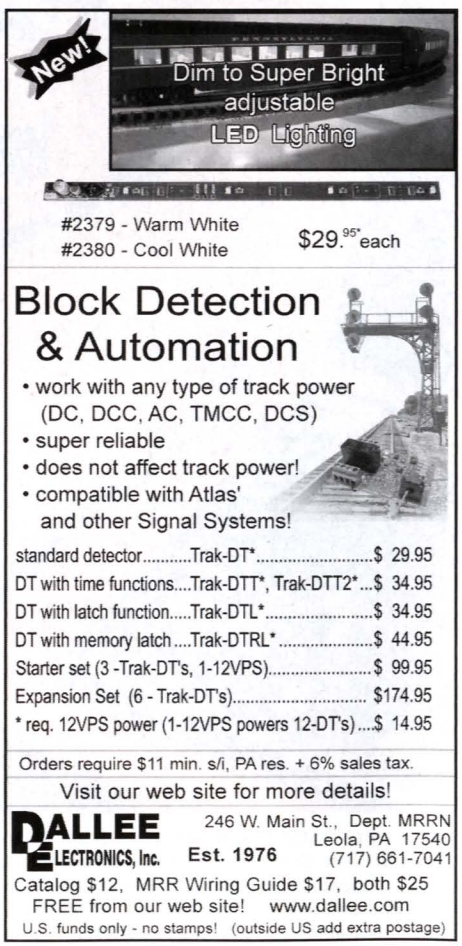
As illustrated in Figure 1, Panel Pro represents a Centralized Traffic Control (CTC) dispatcher paradigm. By using Panel Pro's built-in track editor, you create a CTC panel representing your layout, including block occupancy indicators, turnout controls and signal controls. Behind the scene Panel Pro uses various tables that translate the DCC device addresses to the track objects on the panel. For example, drawing a turnout on the panel requires defining the DCC address that controls that turnout. In most cases Panel Pro populates these tables automatically based on DCC messages generated by the connected DCC system. Once populated, the user typically needs to tweak them slightly before use.

Since Panel Pro operates mainly as a dispatcher panel, it is limited to manual control of the layout (as discussed above). There is no notion of computer automated control. Although not prototypical for a dispatcher paradigm, Panel Pro also includes virtual throttles that allow you to manually control your train's speed and direction while sitting at the computer.

As discussed on the Panel Pro web site, several DCC systems are supported, although not all to the same level of capability. For example, the web site lists support for **Digitrax**, **Lenz**, and **ZIMO**, yet when I attempted to test with the



Panel Pro from JMRI represents a Centralized Traffic Control dispatcher's panel. By using the built-in track editor, you create a CTC panel representing your layout, including block occupancy indicators, turnout controls, and signal controls.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ZIMO system I found several key features not yet supported (no turnout control, no block occupancy detection, etc.). I was successful using Panel Pro with Digitrax and Lenz.

Before installing Panel Pro you must already have Java version 1.3.1 (or higher) installed on your computer system (I tested with version 1.6.0_02 already on my laptop). The Panel Pro web site explains how to install Java from the web (it's available free). With regard to computer resources, the web site explains "...we have had a report that a 100MHz Pentium is too slow to use, and another that a 120MHz Pentium II is fine, so somewhere around there is the minimum machine configuration, but it's important to have enough memory. We recommend you have at least 48MB of memory for Windows 95 or 98, and 64MB of memory for Windows 2000 or later. Having 64MB or 80MB respectively would give somewhat better performance. For the more complicated programmer screens, a display with a resolution of 800 x 600 or larger is strongly recommended."

User support is provided via an online user community "Wiki" (similar to the online encyclopedia, Wikipedia) and a set of online tutorials; there is no formal user manual. Panel Pro includes a traditional Windows embedded help system, except that it is sparsely populated. This was probably the most frustrating aspect that I encountered with Panel Pro, a lack of centralized user documentation. While there seems to be a wealth of information available online, it is distributed between web page text, user tutorials, and the Wiki. Call me old-fashioned, but these types of resources should supplement an existing user manual that is concise and well-written. In my experience nothing beats a quick-start guide when you're new to a product.

Next Month

Part 9B continues our march through the systems selected for Project DCC. Each package, like the one we've already examined, will be up for a close look. We'll also wrap it up with some important observations and perhaps a caveat. Stay tuned!

Mentioned in this article

Panel Pro software (version 1.8 was tested but is up to 2.4 at this point) MSRP: $FREE!

JMRI Freeware
http://jmri.sourceforge.net

—

MS100 Computer Interface; MSRP: $45.00

Digitrax, Inc.
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Lesser-Known S-Scale Products...

... and Why They Remain That Way

S CURVES
FOR AND ABOUT S-GAUGE MODEL RAILROADING
A column by Dick Karnes

MY FIRST TWO COLUMNS as your new "S Curves" author addressed S-scale standard gauge's multiple track, wheel, and coupler choices, and the confusion they create for people considering S. Another source of confusion is where to get things. We S people know where and how to get stuff, but if you're on the outside, finding your way in can be quite difficult. Many don't even know there's an entrance at all. Unless you're in it already, S is probably invisible to you.

Your friendly hobby shop probably has little or no S scale. He'll likely tell you "S is American Flyer, and that's no longer manufactured." And of course, he will recommend equipment in a scale that he actually stocks. Who can blame him?

So the hobbyist seeking to change scales will likely bypass S standard gauge unless he already knows someone in S who can point him in the right direction.

A few S vendors advertise in *Model Railroad News*. There is always an S co-op ad on the inside front cover of *Railroad Model Craftsman*. So we aren't totally invisible. But it must appear that our options are very limited.

Here we see a couple of **S Scale America's** Pacific Fruit Express R-40-23 refrigerator cars getting iced at D. Thompson & Sons Ice Co. S Scale America offers these ready-to-run completely-detailed styrene cars in a variety of roadnames and color schemes. The icing plant was built from a Lehigh Valley Models kit consisting of wood, cardstock, and metal components. Lehigh Valley Models markets a variety of craftsman-style structure kits as well as a few pieces of rolling stock.

However, there are many excellent sources of S-scale models, both kit and ready-to-run. But for many of these, how would anyone know?

An excellent example is the now-defunct line of **Pacific Rail Shops** styrene kits for boxcar, reefer, and grain hoppers. When these first hit the streets in the late 1980s, the S-scale community went wild. They were injection-molded, pre-painted, and lettered. Detail was excellent. Initially, nice color ads appeared in S-specific publications. But other than the known S community, no one else ever saw ads for these fine kits. Sales slowed and the line was eventually sold. Thankfully, the new

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Funaro & Camerlengo offers resin kits for several S-scale cars, including this handsome four-bay Erie "Dunmore" covered hopper car. The kit includes decals for your choice of Erie, Conrail, or Erie-Lackawanna for a red, white, or black car. Couplers and trucks on this car are **Kadee** and **American Models**. The row house on the far left was built from a **Lehigh Valley Models** kit. Sites such as "S Scale Model Railroading" offer a starting point for finding these items.

owner, **S Scale America**, is offering these cars ready to run. As word gets out to the S community, these cars should sell really well. But how would anyone not in S ever find out about them?

Of course, there's a wide spectrum of vendors in all scales, ranging from full-time businesses to weekend mom-and-pop basement manufacturers. Full-time outfits want and need an expanding sales base, so they always appear in print ads. At the other extreme, some basement vendors won't advertise at all. Word of mouth is enough for them; any significant publicity would overwhelm their ability to meet customer demand. As a minority scale, S depends more than most scales on basement operators, and many of them advertise very narrowly or not at all.

So, just to let you know that S standard gauge consists of a lot more than **S Helper Service**, **American Models**, and the S products reviewed in *Model Railroad News*, I have chosen a very small sampling of lesser-known S products to show you in the accompanying photos. In future columns I'll show you more excellent, but lesser-known, S products.

Real promotion requires that the word get out beyond the current customer set. For the vendors who want to stay in business and actually make money, visibility is key. It takes people a while to notice you, and maybe even more time to decide to test your ability to deliver.

Fortunately, S is blessed with some promotion-oriented altruists. One of the most dedicated is Craig O'Connell, who runs the "S Scale Model Railroading" web site (www.trainweb.org/crocon/ss-scale.html). This site, rich with product photos, covers pretty much every S-scale standard-gauge vendor, and there are lots of them! Craig keeps the site scrupulously up to date. So before any of you

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Feel free to e-mail any comments or questions about S scale in general to scurves@modelrailroadnews.com or snail-mail them to S-Curves, Model Railroad News, P.O. Box 1080, Merlin, OR 97532-1080. Suggestions, contributions, and announcements are all welcome.

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—

Ye Olde Huff N Puff
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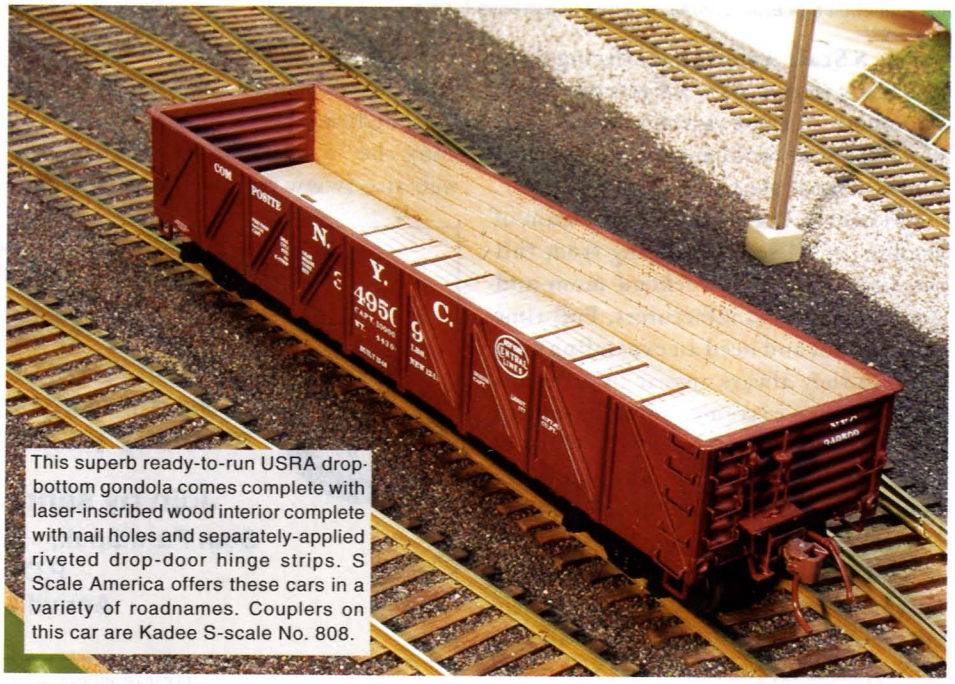
Another excellent source of kits for S-scale is **Ye Olde Huff 'n Puff**. Shown here is one of their 50-foot express refrigerator cars with prepainted and lettered "Railway Express" sides and letter board. This particular model has HO Kadee #5 couplers with lengthened gladhands. American Models four-wheel trucks for heavyweight passenger cars are appropriate for this car.



This superb ready-to-run USRA drop-bottom gondola comes complete with laser-inscribed wood interior complete with nail holes and separately-applied riveted drop-door hinge strips. S Scale America offers these cars in a variety of roadnames. Couplers on this car are Kadee S-scale No. 808.

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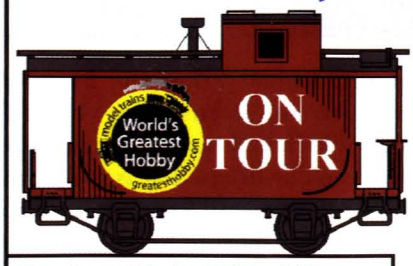

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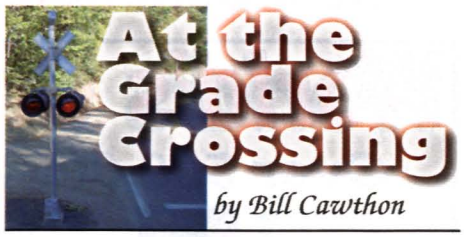

by Bill Cawthon

YOU MAY or may not be familiar with **Brekina**, a modelmaker based in Teningen, Germany, but 2009 could be the year you will sit up and take notice.

For much of its history, Brekina was known for relatively inexpensive, pretty-good-to-good models of older, mostly German, cars and trucks. There was nothing wrong with the tooling or workmanship; the Brekina models just needed some additional detailing to look their best.

Then, about six years ago, Brekina introduced their "Top Decoration" models. Overnight, Brekina was playing in the big leagues. Their models were beautifully detailed, foreground-quality pieces that could be added to a layout just as they came out of the box.

Brekina also started to branch out. Whereas most of their models had been based on West German or East German prototypes, models of Swedish and Italian cars, including Volvos and Alfa Romeos, began to appear. An OEM production deal with a Chinese modelmaker enabled Brekina to release a torrent of new international models including a Saab 96, a Rover 3500, a Morris Minor, a Peugeot 504 and a Renault 12. [Author's Note: All of these are prototypical for the U.S.]

Incidentally, a new line, **Starmada**, appears in Brekina's catalog this year. Starmada is the brand name for a line of models being produced by **Ricko Ltd.** From the photos I have seen, the models look to be every bit as nice as the regular Ricko line and one of the first will be a replica of the mid-1960s Mercedes-Benz 600 Pullman limousine that looks absolutely gorgeous. Other Starmada Mercedes models will be appearing throughout 2009. As I understand it, Brekina will distribute the line in Germany; Ricko will handle distribution in other markets.

From our point of view, though, the big news comes from Brekina itself. According to its new product brochure, May will see the introduction of a 1970 Chevrolet Camaro, followed by a 1959 Chevrolet El Camino in August. By the way, these are introduction dates; actual delivery will probably be a few months later.

Model railroaders, Chevy buffs, and pony car fans will welcome the Camaro. 1970 was the first year of the second-generation Camaro, a sleek beauty that, even though its introduction was delayed until February 1970, was so popular that production totaled 124,901 cars in just two-thirds of a model year. Had it been available from the fall of 1969, it's possible the Camaro would have matched the 191,522 Mustangs produced that year.

The 1959 El Camino pickup is another replica HO modelers will be glad to see; the latter half of the 1950s still has relatively few vehicle models available. The El Camino was Chevrolet's response to the Ford Ranchero then in its third year on the market. The El Camino was based on the Impala platform and shared much of the Impala's styling, including the cats-eye taillights and wings on the rear. A total of 22,246 El Caminos were produced in 1959, easily eclipsing the 14,169 Rancheros built that year.

While this is great news, it poses an interesting conundrum. You see; I have it on good authority that the Brekina Chevys are not licensed by General Motors. Which makes sense because the Camaro can't be licensed in as the prototype's 188-inch overall length reduced to HO-scale is too short to pass GM's notorious "choke-tube test." However, the model is perfectly legal in Germany. After a long battle in the German courts, followed by another in the European Community courts, General Motors lost its trademark infringement lawsuit against **Autec**, a German model company. In January 2007, the European Court of Justice decided that Autec's use of an Opel logo on a model was simply part of making an accurate replica, and did not constitute infringement. This decision is still giving intellectual property attorneys heartburn because they thought it would be a slam-dunk for GM. Indeed, the court's ruling was so nebulous, some IP attorneys think GM did win, even though Opel's suit reportedly was later dismissed by the German court and the Autec model is still available from the Cartronics web site.

Over here, because U.S. trademark laws are different, a company like **Athearn** or **Atlas**, playing by the rules and working within GM's licensing program, can't make a model of a 1970 (or any other year) Camaro, Corvette, or any of a number of other desirable models of GM vehicles because of the minimum-size standard. Nor can one of the Chinese companies produce one because Article 52 of the Chinese trademark law

Brekina introduced their "Top Decoration" line about six years ago, catapulting their models into the forefront in terms of quality of finish and detail. At the same time, the German modelmaker broadened its scope to include more non-German prototypes like the Italian Alfa Romeo Giulia sedan, Swedish Volvo Amazon station wagon, and British Rover 3500. In 2009, Brekina will produce their first replicas of American cars.

As Brekina has never cared about going after the American market, the company may choose to avoid any potential problems with General Motors by saying "no exports" when it comes to GM replicas. The roadblock shown is a Brekina HO-scale Mercedes-Benz 230 with a Preiser figure.

is even more restrictive than American law when it comes to infringement. You might kid about that last, but did you notice that all those GM models **High Speed** made for **Model Power** and **Malibu International** have disappeared, except for what was on the remainder shelves at Wal-Mart? GM may be running on financial fumes but they still have batteries of attorneys.

In fairness to the General, I should again remind you that GM is required by U.S. law to defend its trademarks. If it wants to control their use at all, it must control every use. And considering that GM's licensing program generates millions of dollars they desperately need right now, I don't see them giving up royalties anytime soon. At the moment, I'd bet GM is making more profit from model cars than they are from real ones.

So who is right? Who is on the side of the angels? The short answer is: Everybody. Because the rules aren't the same for everyone. You may not like licensing, but it's fair. If your identity is worth protecting from theft so are General Motors' various corporate identities, so they are right. In Germany, the government and courts have a different view of things, so Brekina is right, as well, because it's operating within the laws of its home country.

So how do you reconcile these? Durned if I know.

I guess the important question to most of us isn't who is right, it's will we be able to get the Brekina Chevys in the United States? GM can't restrict Brekina because Brekina isn't a licensee and GM cannot require it to be one. And I don't know if GM can prevent the models from entering the United States. However, that might not be an issue because Werner Hartung, Brekina's managing director, neither has, nor wants, a regular U.S. distributor: we get Brekina models only when an enterprising hobby shop orders them direct from Brekina in Germany. It would be quite simple for Brekina to just say "Not for export" and we miss out. We're just not a big enough factor in their sales. So I guess we'll have to wait and see.

On that regrettably unsatisfactory note, it's time to go. See you next month at the grade crossing with some news about models we will be getting.

—

If you have questions or comments for Bill Cawthon about model vehicles, e-mail them to: Gradecrossing@modelrailroadnews.com or snail-mail them to Grade Crossing, Model Railroad News, P.O. Box 1080, Merlin, OR 97532-1080.

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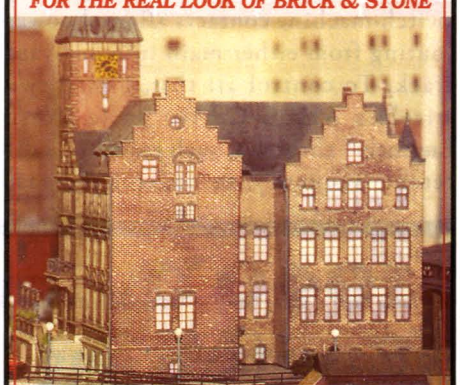

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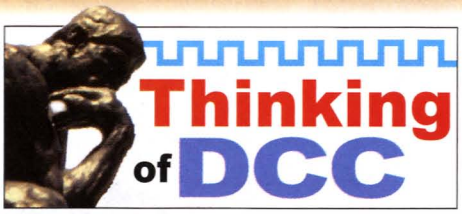
My Conversion to DCC



Guest Column & Photos by Dick Karnes

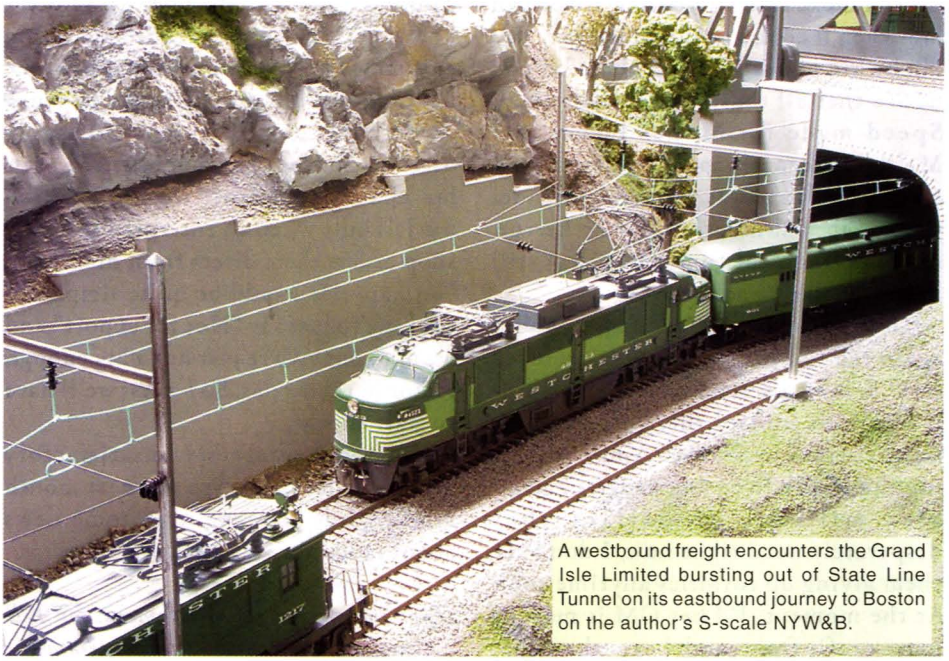
Lots of authors promote DCC these days, and let me be clear that I love DCC. However, converting an existing layout to DCC is not as easy as one might infer from these articles. My real-life journey from DC to DCC on a fairly large layout might provide interested readers with a realistic picture of what they might face.

PART 1: Basic Wiring

My New York, Westchester & Boston has a double-track main line, two single-track branches, and two modest staging yards. There is a terminal with four passenger tracks, a railway express spur, a five-track freight yard, caboose track, two run-around tracks, and a small engine-servicing facility. There's a through passenger station with freight mains routed around and beneath. There's also a float yard, a multi-industry spur line, and a motor shop for the heavy electrics. It's a fairly large layout — 12 feet by 43 feet.

I had always been pretty good at wiring my railroads for maximum flexibility. This layout is in fact simpler in concept than my previous layout. The double-track main line lent itself to independent controls for eastbound and westbound trains, and innovative use of auxiliary switch-machine contacts allowed power-routing from either main into any yard track. To control all this, I used two wireless Aristo-Craft "Basic Train Engineer" throttles, each tuned to a different frequency, to control the eastbound and westbound main line trains respectively. There were also tethered cabs for the float yard, freight yard, passenger terminal, and engine servicing tracks respectively. Finally, there was a station for the dispatcher, who controlled staging-yard turnouts but not any trains. The goal was to also have the dispatcher computer-generate and print manifests and switch lists for the train operators.

But there were some annoyances. In particular, there was a place in the terminal throat that required punching switch-machine buttons in a particular order, and I invariably got it wrong if I was away from the layout for any period of time. There was also a portion of one of the mains that required a rotary switch to handle two-way traffic entering or coming off the branch line. Visits to three separate control stations were required for the simple task of turning a loco on the yard wye. The final straw occurred when I had to convert a second portion of one of the mains to two-way operation. The circuitry for this would be too complex to implement without toggle-switch selection. I was already tired of having to re-learn how to run my railroad after every absence, so I finally threw in the towel and decided to convert to DCC.



A westbound freight encounters the Grand Isle Limited bursting out of State Line Tunnel on its eastbound journey to Boston on the author's S-scale NYW&B.

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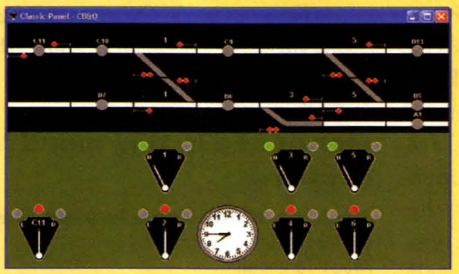

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I had some limited experience with wireless DCC on my friend Roger Nulton's layout, so I decided on the NCE system, the same one that Roger was using. I took a copy of my layout diagram down to Steve dePolo, owner of The Inside Gateway, my local hobby shop. Together we developed a list of the equipment I needed — a basic wireless outfit, wireless repeater, four extra throttles, ten decoders (I'll need another 30), four phase reversers, an extra panel plug-in, and a controller that divides the layout into four independent power districts — all of this for an outlay of close to two grand.

Roger helped me with the wiring. (The "wireless" feature pertains only to the throttles. Everything else has to be wired.) First we had to create 12-gauge twisted pairs of bus wires. These we created from ordinary BX cable, stripping off the insulation, removing the bare ground wire, and using an electric drill to chuck and twist the wires around each other. We strung about 150 feet of this stuff beneath the track base. Then came the job of essentially replacing all the layout wiring. The only wires that I could keep were those that powered turnout frogs from switch-machine contacts. I couldn't even save the leads from the stock rails to the switch-machine contacts. These all had to be re-routed directly from the bus — as did many more track feeders (approximately every six feet to every rail).

Oddly, once we finished rewiring the double-track main, a staging yard, and the through passenger station, there was much less of a rat's nest of wire beneath my

A black and gold F-unit rumbles past Ellettsville station on Roger Nulton's DCC-equipped S-scale Monon Railroad.

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tracks. Roger had lent me one of his decoder-equipped locos to facilitate testing the new wiring, which helped greatly.

In theory the rewiring is simple. Just strip out all the old wiring, install 12-gauge twisted-pair bus wires, drop feeders every six feet or so, and make sure that all the turnout frogs are powered directly from the bus via just one set of switch-machine contacts. But let me tell you, even if it were just this simple, there is ample opportunity for error. I realized at some point that I needed to have an ammeter and a voltmeter connected across the two bus wires at all times (with power applied) as I was making all of these new connections. With literally hundreds of new soldered wire connections, one WILL make an occasional error.

It took about two weeks of not-too-intensive effort to get the main line up and running. I really enjoyed the ability to run a train on either main, using the three crossovers to switch back and forth between mains, something previously impossible.

Then came the terminal area. I nearly tore out what remains of my hair! Except for the main line per se, all of my power was routed/cascaded through sequential contacts on switch machines, as many as eight of these in the terminal. There is tremendous potential for current loss through all these contacts. It didn't matter as long as one throttle controlled one locomotive, but with DCC, I've got to have five amps and 12 volts available everywhere all the time. So the route-controlled power scheme had to go. I could not simply replace my conventional terminal power with DCC input and expect things to work.

Finally, I tackled the rest of the layout, the two branch lines and their shared staging yard. This went pretty easily because now I knew what I was doing! Since then I'm having plenty of fun with my new DCC system and about a dozen locos newly equipped with decoders. The real power of DCC is that I can finally run my trains instead of running my track (the NCE slogan).

Mentioned vendors in this column:

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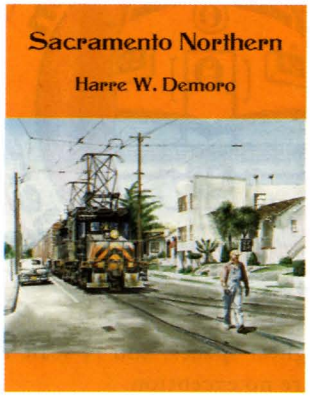

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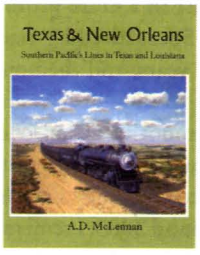

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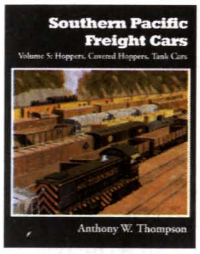

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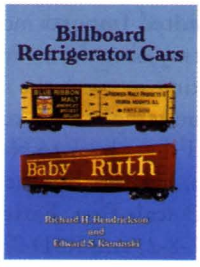

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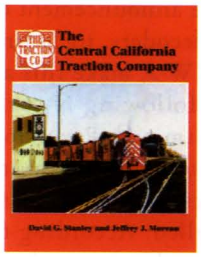

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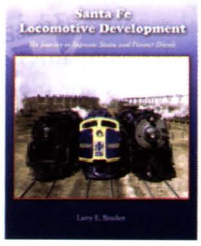

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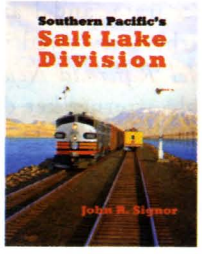

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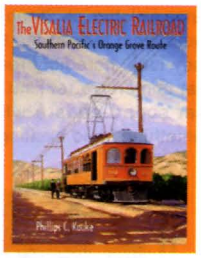

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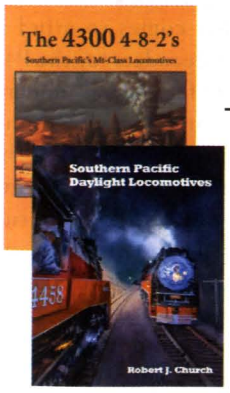

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Thoughts on Small Scale Sound

BY STEVEN GOEHRING — Back when I was young... Oops, sorry about that, I didn't mean to start off on that note. What I meant to say is, it was only a few years ago where had you shown anyone an N-scale locomotive with digitally controlled sound, they would have shaken their head and walked right into you, thinking it was impossible for you to be anything more than a figment of their imagination. The technology just didn't exist in a mass-produced form.

Sound decoders had existed in larger scales for years, and then one company decided to try to shoe-horn a decoder into an N-scale locomotive. That locomotive was the **Con-Cor** PB-1 dummy unit with **Soundtraxx** decoders. They sounded good and hit stores around 2003. I remember seeing them on the shelves at **Trains N' Lanes Hobbies**, and it wasn't long after that when the first **Broadway Limited Imports** models began arriving. I got my job in the model train department just in time to watch the factory-installed DCC-Sound revolution take off.

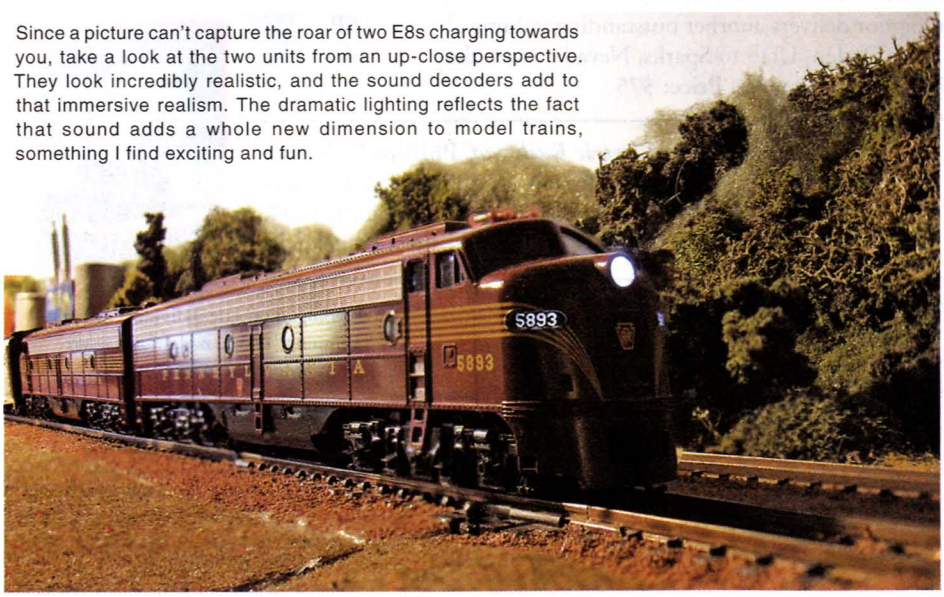
I'll get back to N-scale sound in a minute, but let's look at how it developed in HO scale first. Early models like the GG-1, 2-8-2, and RSD-7 were impressive, and they were close to the quality of current Digital Command Control/DC current dual-mode sound decoders. As the DCC decoder companies' sound libraries grew, the sounds got more accurate and more exact. I remember the **Atlas** SD-35 and **Proto 2000** GP-30 being the finest-sounding diesels on the market, and it took a while to reach those sound quality levels. Sounds grew easier to use as competition from proprietary sound decoders increased. Some of these have established themselves as major players in the sound market, like **LokSound ESU**, and others are in the process, like **MTH Electric Trains**.

Now how was sound, as a separate aspect of model railroading, accepted by modelers in HO scale? Everyone was curious at first, and we all liked playing with the locomotives on the Trains N' Lanes test track. People would buy them as single show pieces. It just wasn't practical to build a fleet of sound locomotives yet, so purchases were slow until the market grew. I remember that the first SW-7s were the first models I saw as really universal sound-equipped bestsellers. Everyone wanted one; and when Geeps and E-units followed, sound-equipped model railroad fleets were born all across Trains N' Lanes' customer base area. So it took a variety of quality offerings for sound decoders to reach popularity among HO scalers, and as each new model came out with sound as an option, more and more of our customers ordered or bought their locomotives with sound.

N-Scale Sound

With miniaturization putting R/C cars in our pockets and 80 gigabytes of music into an MP3 player the size of an N-scale boxcar, it was only a matter of time before sound reached N scale. People complained that the speakers were too small, that it would never catch on due to thin tone and weak bass sound. I would guess that the O-scale fans said the same thing about HO scale years ago. Miniaturization will press technology into ever-tighter spaces, and N-scale locomotives are no exception.

I surveyed the market of N-scale DCC sound-equipped locomotives to report on here, and I'm thinking it is nearing the critical point at which sound-equipped fleets are possible. **Model Rectifier Corp** has released plenty of DCC sound decoders that have paved the way for more N-scale sound products. They advertise decoders for many N-scale diesel locomotives from Atlas, **Kato**, and **Athearn**, and decoders for steam locomotives are available as well. With the announcement of several more sound decoders, including one for Kato's tiny NW-2, make this an exciting time to be following N-scale sound. Broadway Limited/Precision Craft Models is set to release more N-scale passenger diesels with excellent sound decoders installed. According to their Customer Service, the spring release dates for their Alco PA-series and EMD E-series diesels are accurate, and I am hopeful you will see them reviewed in future issues of *Model Railroad News*. Between these available aftermarket decoders from MRC and ESU and ready-to-run releases from Athearn, let's take a look at how you could start building a fleet with sound in mind.



Since a picture can't capture the roar of two E8s charging towards you, take a look at the two units from an up-close perspective. They look incredibly realistic, and the sound decoders add to that immersive realism. The dramatic lighting reflects the fact that sound adds a whole new dimension to model trains, something I find exciting and fun.

Building a Noisy Fleet

The first idea that comes to mind is Amtrak. MRC offers decoders for the P42 and F40PH, and one for several modern freight diesels. So for our first "sound layout" idea, let's consider a model of the Chicago passenger hub just as the P42s are starting to enter service. F40PHs still run on some Amtrak trains, and SD40-2s and even some new wide cab units round out the Kato-MRC motive power fleet. Perhaps some E9s linger in commuter service, or MRC's announced sound decoder for the Kato NW-2 will give you a unit to use as

a stand-in local switcher. You can even use the MRC decoder for narrow-hood Atlas locomotives to increase the variety.

We're not all modern modelers, of course, so let's look at some older, or just plain different, situations to model with sound-equipped locomotives in mind. You could depict Harrisburg, PA with sound-equipped E8s, GG1s, some C-Liners, NW-2s, PA-1s, F3s, or F7s, or steamers that you can fit a Soundraxx or **LokSound** decoder into. Speaking of steamers, a model of the early days of diesels on most big steam roads would work well with plenty of smoking behemoths, like Walthers' Y-3 class, mixed in with F-units, C-Liners, or E7s. Or move east and forward in time to another interesting railroad, the Blue Mountain, Reading & Northern, and put some U23Bs, SD40-2s, NW2s, and perhaps a 4-6-2 steamer to work in scenic Northeast Pennsylvania.

The truth is that with LokSound and Soundraxx, covering N-scale steam decoders and MRC and PCM producing diesel sound products, many locomotives have a compatible sound chip. I'm very intrigued by these advances and will keep monitoring and reporting on them as I can.

I just hope people will open their mind and enjoy N-scale sound. I find so many angry rants on internet forums about N-sound decoders, but those posts are a self-fulfilling prophecy of pessimism. If we subscribe to the thought that N-scale sound is impossible, that it will never measure up to HO, we trap ourselves with the very opposite of the creativity that model railroading thrives on. N-scale sound does not measure up to HO. By that logic, HO does not measure up to O scale, but HO scale sound is widely accepted.

I have accepted N-scale sound as something to watch, report on, and even buy for myself. You'll remember I'm a really stingy college kid, but I enjoy the added dimension of sound enough to be willing to invest some money in it. The two E8s hooked me, and they're a very early entry into the N-scale sound market. I can't wait to see what else this new aspect of the hobby holds for small-scale modelers with larger-than-scale motivation.

—

If you have any questions, comments, tips, or suggestions concerning this column or model railroading in general, send them to: The Future of Model Railroading, c/o Model Railroad News, P.O. Box 1080, Merlin, OR 97532-1080 or e-mail to: tamr@modelrailroadnews.com.

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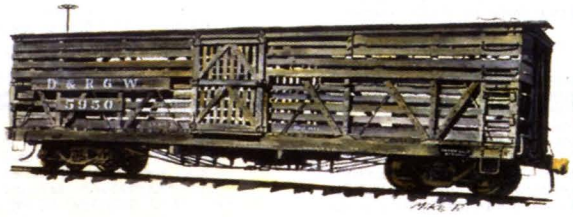

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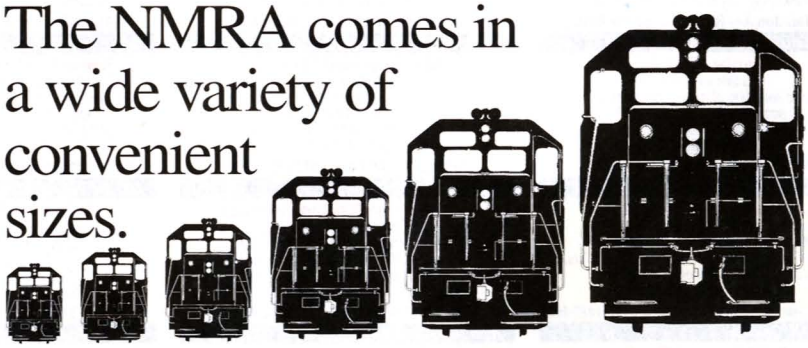

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WANTED: to buy or borrow used Great Model Railroads DVDs 56 thru 60. Call (800) 262-1812.

WANTED: Book by Alvin F. Staufer, Erie Power Steam + Diesel. Call Jim Dale, (440) 943-1282.

FREE* CLASSIFIED ADS!

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1
2
3
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EVENTS & ACTIVITIES

Events for the June 2009 issue must be received by April 17th, 2009

Attn. Clubs & Show Sponsors — Place your FREE event announcement in front of thousands of readers! Let them know about your special event! Send your announcement to us at least three months prior to the event for maximum coverage. Write to: Events, c/o Model Railroad News, P.O. Box 1080, Merlin, OR 97532-1080. You can fax us your event at: (541) 955-0346; or e-mail: events@modelrailroadnews.com

Free trial subscription cards of Model Railroad News are available upon request for show and meet attendees. Call, fax, or e-mail for details.

Events & Activities can be viewed online at www.ModelRailroadNews.com

California, Los Angeles, (Hawthorne) — The Los Angeles Model Railroad Society will be holding Open House on April 4-5th, at 14005 S. Crenshaw Blvd. Hours will be from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. both days. Their 2,000 square foot HO standard and narrow gauge layout features DCC control. You are welcome to run one of their trains for 30 minutes for $10.00. Admission is free. For more information, call: (310) 675-3361 (please leave a phone number slowly); e-mail: info.lamrs@verizon.net; or visit: www.lamrs.org

Florida, Deerfield Beach — The Deerfield Beach Railroad Museum will be sponsoring a Swap Meet to be held on April 4th, located on the freight deck of the Deerfield Beach Amtrak Station, 1300 W. Hillsborough Blvd. Hours will be from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Admission is free; there will be plenty of parking either east or west of the tracks. For more information, contact: Richard Linquist, (954) 448 8935; or Butch Tanis, (954) 974 6798.

Florida, Fort Myers — Gulf Coast Express III - NMRA Sunshine Region Spring Convention will be held May 8-10, at the Clarion Hotel, 12635 S. Cleveland Avenue. Attractions to include: fourteen clinics, an operating session, model contests, special spouse events, and layout tours. Non-NMRA members are welcome. For more information, contact: Peter Gross, (239) 731-3645; or visit www.scalerails.org

Florida, Largo — Suncoast Model Railroad Club will be holding a Train Show & Club Open House on April 25-26th. Railroad show will be at Minnreg Hall, 6340 126th Avenue. Hours will be from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Attractions to include over 100 tables of model trains and railroad paraphernalia. Club Open House with operating HO- and N-scale layouts will be at the Suncoast Model Railroad Club House, 12355 62nd Street North, Suite A. Train Show admission: $5.00, adults; $1.00, ages 12-17; under 11 admitted free. Admission to Club House is free. Plenty of free parking is available. For more information, call (727) 523-1860; or e-mail: info@suncoastmrrc.com

Florida, Pinellas Park — Regal Railways will be sponsoring a Train Show on May 2nd, at the Florida Knights of Columbus Hall, 7177 58th Street. Hours will be from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Attractions to include vendors and a small layout. Admission: $4.00, adults; children under 13 admitted free. For more information, contact: Joe Schramm, (727) 244-1341.

Illinois, Mount Zion — The Decatur Mt. Zion & Southern Railroad Club will be co-sponsoring the Decatur Train Fair 2009 with the Decatur Civic Center on April 18-19th, at the Decatur Civic Center, located at the corner of Eldorado and Franklin Streets. Hours will be from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. on Saturday, and from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. on Sunday. Attractions to include: a swap meet, vendors, clinics, layouts, and door prizes. Admission: $4.00, adults; children 12 and under admitted free with an adult. For more information, contact: Steven Bricker, 4926 Kruse Rd., Mt. Zion, IL 62549; (217) 864-4397 home; (217) 454-2528 cell; e-mail: sabricker@comcast.net

Illinois, Wheaton — The Great Midwest Train Show will be held on April 5th, and May 3rd, at the DuPage County Fairgrounds, 2015 W. Manchester Road. Show hours will be from 9:30 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Admission: $7.00, adults; children under 12 admitted free. For more information, contact: Great Midwest Train Show, P.O. Box 34, Elmhurst, IL 60126; (630) 290-1962; fax: (240) 597-4482; www.greatmidwesttrainshow.com

Iowa, Spencer — The Prairie Lakes Division Spring Meet will be held on April 18th, at the Clay County Fairgrounds Depot Building. Hours will be from 8:30 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. with business meeting at 2:30 p.m. Attractions will include contests for diesel engines, steam engines, rolling stock revenue and non-revenue; and photo-contests for models and prototypes, with a new open class category- anything railroad. Entries need to be registered by 10:30 a.m. For more information, contact: Ron Peterson, 604 W. Willow, Cherokee, IA 51012; (712) 225-4780; e-mail: pete31545@yahoo.com

Maryland, Baltimore — Thomas the Tank Engine will be returning to the B&O Railroad Museum on April 24-26, and May 1-3. B&O Railroad Museum is located at 901 W. Pratt Street. Tickets are $18.00 for ages 2 and up. Advance purchase is recommended. For more information, call (866) 468-7630; or visit: www.ticketweb.com/dowt For a calendar of events at the Baltimore & Ohio Museum, visit: www.borail.org/special-events.shtml

Maryland, Cumberland — The Maryland-West Virginia Model Railroad Association of Cumberland, Maryland will be having a Train Show on May 2nd, at the Allegany County Fairgrounds, Route 220 South. Hours will be from 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. Attractions will include a show and sale, as well as indoor and outdoor operating layouts in HO- and G- scales. Admission: $3.00, adults; under 12 admitted free. For more information, contact: Eric Clark, MD-WV Model Railroad Association, P.O. Box 696, Ridgeley, WV 26753; (304) 726-4395; e-mail: eclark327@hotmail.com

Maryland, Timonium — The "Great Scale Model Train Show" plus the "Hi-Rail & Collectors Train Show" will be held April 4-5th, at the Maryland State Fairgrounds, 2200 York Road. Show hours will be from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. on Saturday, and from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. on Sunday. Attractions will include 25,000 square feet of beautifully detailed display layouts in all scales; free train movies; clinics and demonstrations; and over 800 tables of model trains, equipment, and related items for sale. Refreshments will be available; parking is free. Admission: $9.00, adults; children under 15 admitted free; $18.00, family. Good for both days. For more information, contact: Howard Zane, 5236 Thunder Hill Road, Columbia, MD 21045; (410) 730-1036; e-mail: hzane1@comcast.net; www.gsmts.com

Massachusetts, West Barnstable — The Cape Cod Model Railroad Club Train Show will be held on April 26th, at Cape Cod Community College Physical Education Building, Route 132, Exit #6 from Route 6. Hours will be from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Attractions to include operating layouts and model train dealers from around New England with trains in all scales. Food concession and free parking will be available. Admission: $5.00, adults; $3.00, seniors and children 12-18; $9.00, family maximum; children under 12 admitted free with adult. For more information, contact: Rich Houghtaling, (508) 432-2287; www.ccmrc.net

Michigan, Port Huron — The 27th Annual Huron Modelers Model Train Show will be held on April 26th, at McMorran Place, 701 McMorran Blvd. Hours will be from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Attractions to include scenic train layouts, operating models, displays and exhibits, plus a Railroad Flea Market and Swap Shop. Admission: $5.00, adults; children 5 and under admitted free. For more information, contact: Fred Cefeske, 4049 Pine Grove Avenue, Fort Gratiot, MI 48059; (810) 385-8815 between 4:00 p.m. to 9:30 p.m.

Minnesota, Alexandria — The Alexandria Model Railroad Association will be hosting the 14th Annual Greater Minnesota Train Show on May 2nd, at the Runestone Community Center, 998 3rd Avenue West. Hours will be from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Attractions to include memorabilia, and a flea market. Admission: $3.00, adults; under 10 admitted free. For more information, contact: Dave Brosh, (320) 283-5850; or visit www.geocities.com/lamrra

Nebraska, North Platte — The Nebraska West-Central Division of the NMRA's 15th Annual Train Show will be held on April 18-19th, at the D&N Event Center, 501 East Walker Road. Show hours will be from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. on Saturday, and from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. on Sunday. Union Pacific tours will be available as an extra fare item on Saturday the 18th only. Admission: $3.00, adults; $1.00, children under 12; children under 5 admitted free with paid adult. For more information, contact: Gene Tacey, P.O. Box 485, Sutherland, NE 69165; (308) 386-2489; e-mail: taceys@gpcom.net

New York, Massapequa Park, L.I. — The Sunrise Trail Division, NER, NMRA will be holding their Spring Meet on April 11th, at Saint David's Lutheran Church, 20 Clark Blvd. Hours will be from 10:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Attractions to include modeling clinics, a model contest, NMRA Merit Award judging, a white elephant table, and swearing in of new officers and directors. Admission: $2.00, NMRA/STD members; $3.00, others. For more information, contact: John Mac Gown, 32 Liberty Blvd., Valley Stream, NY 11580; (516) 285-0876; e-mail: burlyjohn@verizon.net

North Carolina, Hendersonville — The French Broad e'N'pire NTrak Club will be sponsoring Spring Rails 2009 Model Railroad Show and Swap Meet on April 25th, at Whitmire Auditorium, located on Lily Pond Lane. Hours will be from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Admission: $5.00, adults; Scouts in uniform, and children under 13 admitted free. For more information, contact: Chuck Place, 1396 Spicer Cove Rd., Hendersonville, NC 28792; (828) 685-2726; e-mail: hmp3@blueridge.net; www.fbe-ntrak.com

Ohio, Coshocton — The Coshocton Model Railroad Club will be having a Model Railroad Open House on May 9th, at the Coshocton County Fairgrounds, 707 Kenilworth Avenue. Hours will be from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Special attractions to include a PRR cabin car, a Nickel Plate caboose on display, and an operating interlocking machine from Quincy, Ohio connected to the layout. Bring the entire family to enjoy a behind the scenes look at their railroad. Admission: $2.00, ages 13 and up; $1.00, ages 4-12; 3 and under admitted free. For more information, contact: Edward Skerness, (614) 895-0463 before 9:00 p.m.; e-mail: amrecrr@hotmail.com

Ohio, Hilliard — Central Ohio N-Trak will be presenting Ohio N Scale Weekend "For N-Scalers by N-Scalers" May 1-3, at the Franklin County Fairgrounds. Hours will be 1:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. on Friday; from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. on Saturday; and from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. on Sunday. Event registration is $10.00. For more information, contact: David White, (614) 991-4547; e-mail: dcwizard@wowway.com; or visit www.centralohiontrak.org

Ohio, Olmsted Falls — The Cuyahoga Valley & West Shore Model Railroad Club's Annual Spring Open House will be held April 18-19th, at the Olmsted Falls Depot, 25802 Garfield Boulevard. Hours will be from 12:00 noon to 5:00 p.m. Attractions to include Lionel, HO-, and N-scale layouts. Admission: $2.00, adults; children admitted free. For more information, contact: Bill Cramer, (440) 572-3714; e-mail: wmhcramer@yahoo.com

Pennsylvania, Cheswick — Steel City Con, AKA The Pittsburgh Toy, Comic, and Childhood Collectibles Show will be held April 24-26, at the Pittsburgh Indoor Sports Arena, 220 Rich Hill Road. Hours will be from 2:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. on Friday, from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. on Saturday, and from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. on Sunday. Attractions to include hourly prize drawings. Admission: $10.00 a day or $20.00 3-day pass, adults; $5.00 a day or $10.00 3-day pass, children 12 and under. Parking is free. For more information, contact: Orangestone Promotions, Inc., (412) 213-0224; www.steelcitycon.com

Pennsylvania, Grove City — NMRA MRC Division 11's Second Annual Train Show and Jamboree will be held on April 4th, at Grove City Masonic Lodge, 1340 W. Main Street. Hours will be from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Attractions to include how-to clinics, train displays, videos, a flea market, and a white elephant table. Admission: $5.00, adults; children 12 and under admitted free. For more information, contact: Robert Hartle, 851 Reed Rd., Clarion, PA 16214; (814) 223-9699; e-mail: cmrproducts@yahoo.com

Pennsylvania, Monaca — The Beaver County Spring Model Train Show will be held on April 26th at Center Stage, 1495 Old Brodhead Road. Hours will be from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Admission: $4.00, adults; and children under 12 admitted free. For more information, contact: Glenn Wallace (724) 775-8023; e-mail: info@bcmrr.railfan.net; www.bcmrr.railfan.net

South Dakota, Rapid City — The Black Hills Railway Society will be holding their Spring Open House on April 18th, in the basement of the South Dakota Stock Grower's Association, 426 Saint Joseph Street. Hours will be from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Attractions will include three operating layouts in HO-scale and N-gauge, along with videos, seminars, a swap meet, and more. See and hear the benefits of DCC operation. Admission: $2.00, adults or $1.00 with a can of food; children under 12 admitted free with an adult. For more information, contact: Bob Fewel, (605) 721-7716; e-mail: zzloconutzz@rushmore.com

Wisconsin, Madison — The NMRA, Midwest Region, South Central Wisconsin Division will be holding their Monthly Meeting on April 5th, at Fitchburg Community Center, 5510 Lacy Road (1/4 mile east of Fish Hatchery Road). Meeting will begin at 1:00 p.m. Program to include live clinics, model and photo contests, door prizes, and home layout viewing. Admission is free. For more information, contact: Radleigh Becker, (608) 231-1817; e-mail: rbecker@merr.com; www.nmra-scwd.org

Wisconsin, Menomonie — The Barron Company Model Railroad Club will be co-sponsoring the 8th Annual Happy Grandparents Model Train Show to be held April 18-19th, at Menomonie Middle School, 921 21st Street. Hours will be from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. on Saturday, and from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. on Sunday. Attractions to include 49 operating layouts, over 15 vendors, door prizes for adults and children, a small riding Thomas the Tank, and speakers on local railroads. Admission: $5.00, adults; $3.00, students (ages 6 to 14); children under 6 admitted free; $13.00, family admission (2 adults and 2 students). For more information, contact: J. Hinrichs, N5489 870th St., Elk Mound, WI 54739; (715) 505-4044 (calls will be returned after 7:00 p.m.); email: janelle_hirichs@msd.k12.wi.us

CANADA

Canada, Alberta, Calgary — Calgary Model Railway Society will be presenting SUPERTRAIN 2009, on April 18-19th, at Calgary Soccer Centre, 7000 48th Street SE. Hours will be from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. both days. Show to feature over 60,000 square feet of operating model railroad layouts, displays, Lionel, Lego trains, Thomas and Friends, Garden Railways, photo exhibits, merchandise for sale, live demos and clinics, and a children's play area. Admission: $10.00, adults; $5.00, children 6-12; children under 6 admitted free. $1.00 off admission with donation of non-perishable food item to Calgary Food Bank. Parking is free. For more information, e-mail: info@supertrain.ca; or visit: www.supertrain.ca

MRN: A Year in Review

As a courtesy to our readers, we have compiled an index featuring every product reviewed in the pages of MRN over the past year. We hope you find it useful.

March 2009

Project DCC, Part 8 Integrating a Grade Crossing
Aristo-Craft (L) 2-Bay Hopper
Atlas (N) Code 65 True-Track & (HO) Covered Hopper
Bachmann (On30) Railbus and Trailer & (Book) *E-Z Model Railroads*
Banta (HO, S & O) Railroad Signs
Bar Mills (HO & O) Gas Stop
Bluford Shops (N) Auto Boxcars
Broadway Limited (HO) 2-10-2 Steam Locomotive
Drail Modelspoor (Windows PC) *AnyRail Layout Design Software*
Norscot (HO) Caterpillar D9T Bulldozer
S Helper (S) CNJ Cement Car
USA Trains (1:29) *Docksider* 0-6-0T Steam Locomotive

February 2009

Project DCC, Part 7B Signal System Wiring
Aristo-Craft (DVD) *How Model Trains Are Made*
Atlas O (O) MP15 Locomotive
Bachmann (1:20.3) Davenport Critter Mechanical Locomotive
Broadway Limited C30-7
Digitrax (Z, N & HO) DZ125 Decoder
Kato (N) Southern Pacific PA-1 & PB-1 Diesel Locos & GG1 Electric Locomotive
Lenz (DCC) Lenz Set-100 Starter Set Upgrade
Matysik Display Shelf (Multi Scale) Display Shelves
Old and Weary (HO) Tappan Station
Piko (1:22.5) Taurus Locomotive
Seivers Benchwork (ALL) Benchwork Section Kits
Walthers (HO) H-10-44 Diesel Loco & Everett Street Station

January 2009

Project DCC, Part 7A Signal System Wiring
Special Report: Kader Buys Sada Kan
Athearn (N) F45/FP45 Diesel Locomotive & (HO) Checker Cab
Faller (N) Animated Car System
Grand River Models (S) Greg's Grocery Kit
MRC (DCC) 1820 Sound Decoder for Athearn RS3 Locomotive
MTH (HO) NYC 4-8-2 *Mohawk* & (O) CA-1 Caboose
Signature Press (Book) *Southern Pacific Freight Cars, Vol 5*
Walthers (HO) *Hiawatha* Diner and Tap Lounge & RS-2/RSC-2

December 2008

Aristo-Craft (1:29) 40-Foot Boxcars
Athearn (N) Ford C Rescue Trucks, (HO) CSX & Santa Fe Train Sets, (HO) F-7A/B Diesel Locomotive
Atlas (N) Trainman Train Set
Atlas O (O) Industrial Rail Starter Set
Bachmann (Track) E-Z Command DCC Turnouts
Blair Lines (HO) *Pizzaland* Kit
MTH (HO) Railking Scale Diesel Starter Set
Steamscenes (Calendars) 2009 Railroad Themed Calendars
Piko (HO) ICE-3 Train Set
Tokyo Marui (Z) Night Train Set

November 2008

Project DC, Part 6: Turnout Control Wiring
Athearn, Kato & Walthers (HO) Intermodal Cars
Atlas O (O) Master Line, Train Man & Industrial Rail Freight Car Roundup
Bachmann (Fn3) Boxcar
Charles Smiley (Video) *Key System Scrapbook*
Con-Cor (HO) Union Pacific M-10000
GC Laser (N & HO) Utility Truck Toolbox Kit
Granite Creek (On3) Logging Cars
Noch (HO) Shed/Kiosk Kit
Pine Canyon (S0 Professional Building Kit
Preiser (HO) Vegetable Wagon
Smoky Mountian (S) 41-foot Flat Car Kit
Train Control System (DCC & N) Decoder for "Classic N" Locomotives

October 2008

Special Coverage: MTH/MKT Trade Secret Lawsuit Settled
Project DCC Part 5: Track Assembly, Wiring, & Block Detection
Atlas (N) C420 Diesel Locomotive
Bachmann (HO) Peter Witt-Style Street Car
BVRR Specialties (Tool) Maxi-Grip Screw Starter
Grizzly Mountain Engineering (O) Farmers & Freight Wagons
Kadee (HO) Cushion Underframe Boxcars
Kato (N) Gunderson MAXI-IV Well Cars
Lionel (O) Legacy-Equipped FEF-3 Steam Locomotive
NCE (Electronics) DCC Wireless System
NSLC (Tool) Flamingo Glue
Oak Tree Systems (Electronics) SC-2 Servo Controller
Preiser (O) American Railroad Figures
Ye Olde Huff N Puff (On30) Freight Car Kits

September 2008

Special Coverage: NMRA 2008 National Train Show
Project DCC Part 4: Layout Configuration
Banta/Bachmann (On30) Boxcar Body Conversion Kit
Factory Direct Trains (HO) Trackmobile
Golden West Books (Book) *West Coast Interurbans-California*
Lionel (O) Legacy 990 Command Control System
MTH (HO) GS4 4-8-4 *Daylight* (O) Railking SW1 Diesel Locomotive
Red Caboose (HO) S-40-5 Stock Cars
Smokey Mountain Model Works (S) Ventilated Boxcars
Tomix (N) Freight and Fire Trucks
Wheels of Time (N) Harriman Passenger Cars
Woodland Scenics (O) Scenic Accent Figures

August 2008

Project DCC Part 3: DCC System Familiarization
Allen Keller (DVD) *Great Model Trains Vol. 58*
Aristo-Craft (1:24) C-16 Steam Locomotive
Bachmann (All Scales) DCC Control System, (Fn3) Tank Cars
Brass Trains (Book) *Brass Model Trains Price & Data Guide Vol. 1*
Broadway Limited (HO) Union Pacific Big Boy Steam Locomotive
Intermountain (N) SD45-2 Diesel Locomotive and Wood Deck Flat Car
Kato (N) Daylight Northern 4-8-4 GS 4 Steam Locomotive Set
MTH O) 19th Century Wood Coaches
Sidetrack Laser (HO) Cougar Ridge Lumber Co.
Siflor (All Scales) Landscaping Material
Walthers (HO) Proto 2000 Early EMD Road Switchers

July 2008

Special Coverage: How to Modify Your Old Roundhouse Box Cab
Project DCC Part 2
Athearn (HO) SD40-T Tunnel Motors
Bachmann (On30) Baldwin 4-4-0 American Steam Locomotive
Brass Guide (Book) *Brass Train Guide Book*
First Gear International (HO & O) TD25 Crawler
ESU/Loksound (All Scales) Sound Decoder with Railmaster Hobbies Ported Speakers
ICOM (N) TMC400 Motorcar, Park Set, Park Institution, and Bulldozer
Micro-Trains (N) 40-Foot Drop Bottom Gondola with Woodchip Extension
River Point Station (HO) F-350 Duallies
USA Trains (1:29) Fairmont Speeders

June 2008

Nuremberg International Toy Fair 2008
Project DCC Part 1
Aristo-Craft (1:29) Live Steam 2-8-2 Mikado Steam Locomotive
Athearn (HO) F-850 Flat Bed MOW Trucks
Atlas Trainman (N) Thrall 4759 Covered Hopper and Master Line (N) ACF 5701
Centerflow Plastics Hopper
Blair Line (HO) Gerald Depot Laser-Cut Kit
Broadway Limited (HO) Blueline RSD-14 "Alligator" Diesel Locomotive
Busch (HO) Summer Cottage Built-Up Structure
Castline (S) Auto-Thentic Pontiac Star Chief, Ford Crestliner & Mercury Sun Valley Autos
Charles Smiley (DVD) *Union Pacific Scrapbook*
Great Northern Book Publishing (BOOK) *BNSF Railway Freight Cars Vol 2.*
Marklin (Z) Commodore J1e Hudson Locomotive
Tangent Scale Models (HO) PS-2CD Hoppers
Walthers (N) Proto N GP18 Diesel Locomotive
Weaver Models (O) Head End RPO and Baggage Cars
Western Scale Models Blacksmith Shoppe Craftsman-style Structure Kit

May 2008

Special Report: 1:87 Vehicle Coverage from the 2008 International Toy Fair
American Ltd. Sand Towers and Fuel Cranes
Aristo-Craft (Large Scale) Rail Joiners Track Accessory
Athearn (HO) Genesis EMD MP15AC Switcher Standard DC & Sound DC/DCC
Atlas O (O) EMD F2/F3s 2-Rail and 3-Rail
Bachmann (1.20.3) Side-Door Gondola
CMW/Walthers (HO) GM PD 4103 Intercity Bus
Golden West Books (Book) *Piggyback and Containers: A History of Rail Intermodal on America's Steel Highway*
MNP/Bachmann/NCE (O) DCC-Powered Track Cleaning Car
Masterpiece (HO) 2007 Jeep Wrangler Unlimited
Micro-Trains (N) ACF Three Dome Tank Car
PrairieWorks (DVD) *SOO Line: From Michigan to Montana*
USA Trains (1:29) "Great Lakes" Ore Cars
Walthers (N) Cornerstone Injection-Molded Structure Kits, (HO) Hiawatha 52-Seat Coach and Express Car

April 2008

Aristo-Craft (1:29) GP40 Locomotive with QSI Sound
Athearn (N) Pre-weathered NACC 50-Foot Boxcars & (HO) John Deere Log Skidder
Atlas O (O) SD40 *Red Baron* Locomotive & Wood Express Reeder
BTS (O) Singer Watch Repair Kit
Bar Mills (HO) Tylick Tool Company Kit
BRAWA (HO) Pin-Socket Street Light
Blackstone Models (HO) D&RGW 3000 Series Boxcars
Broadway Limited (HO) Hybrid 4-6-4 New Haven I-5 Hudson
Charles Smiley (DVD) *Great Shortlines West*
MTH (HO) 2-8-8-8-2 Triplex Locomotive
Masterpiece (HO) 1936 Chrysler Airflow Imperial Eight
QSI Solutions (1:29) Plug-N-Play Aristo Sound Decoder

Model Railroad News
Broadway Limited's affordably priced HO-scale brass hybrid raises the bar
Bluford Shops auto boxcar hits it big
Atlas Code 65 True-Track brings new level of realism
Designing a layout with sectional track gets even easier!

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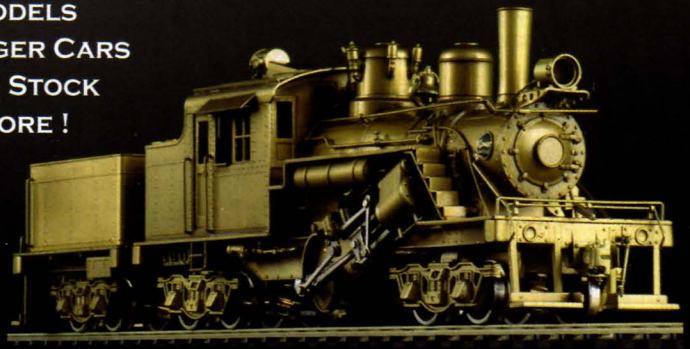

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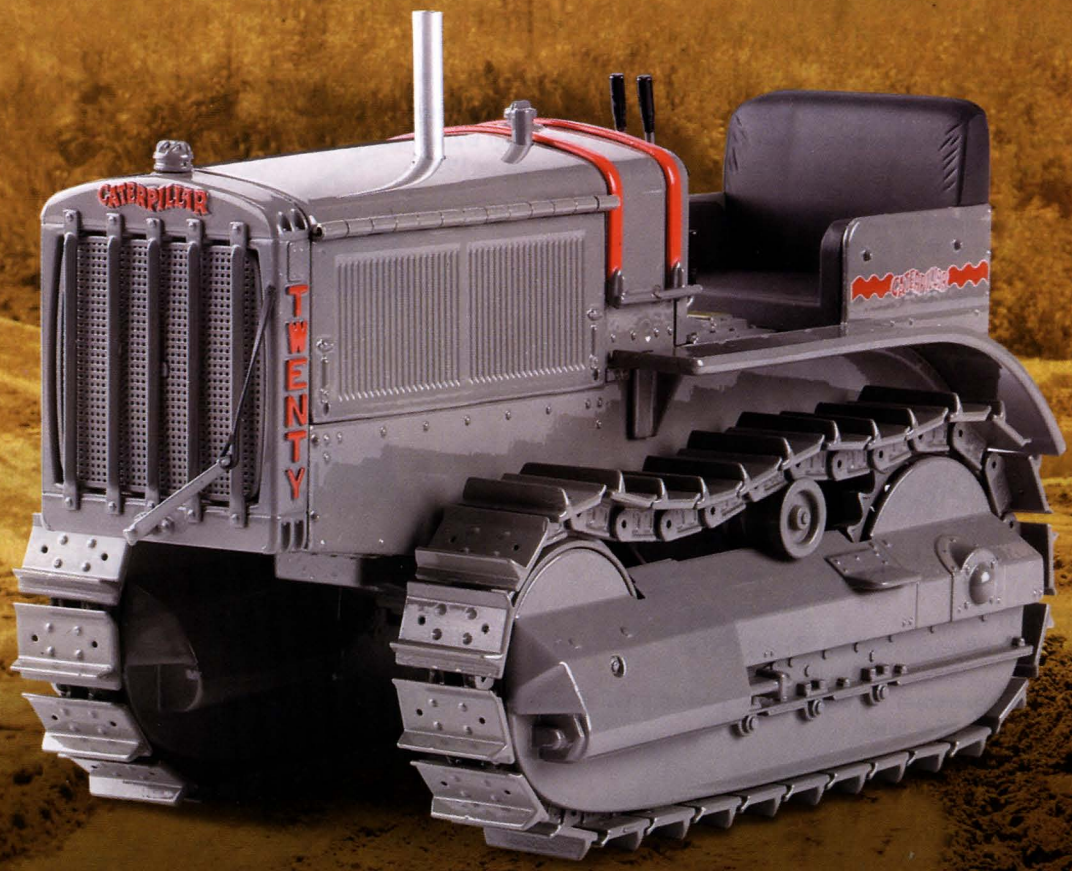

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